The Coroner of Burgos by James Hawthorne

NEW MASSES

JANUARY 11, 1938 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

VOL. XXVI, NO. 3, NEW YORK, N. Y.; IN TWO SECTIONS, OF WHICH THIS IS SECTION ONE

INCLUDED WITH THIS ISSUE:

Monthly Literary Section

(THIRTY-TWO PAGES)

A Gun Is Watered . . . . . A Story by Ted Allan
Two Revolutionary Writers
Ralph Bates . . . . . by Dorothy Brewster
Nikolai Ostrovski . . . . . by Joshua Kunitz
The Company . . . . . by Thomas Wolfe
Five Gypsy Ballads . . . . by Federico Garcia Lorca
With an Introduction by Rafael Alberti
Translated by Langston Hughes
When Poets Stood Alone . . by Dorothy Van Ghent
Pickup . . . . . A Story by Saul Levitt
Twenty Years of Soviet Drama . . by H. W. L. Dana
From Texas . . . . . A Story by L. A. Lauer
A Summer Night . . . . . Verse by David Wolff

Hague Does the Reactionary

by James Macready

The Students Reject Isolation

by Joseph Starobin

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

WHEN New Theater suspended last March a great gap was left in the revolutionary cultural movement, which has yet to be filled. In view of the success of the NEW MASSES monthly literary section, various people in the theater, cinema, and dance fields have been discussing the possibility of the NEW MASSES launching another monthly section, to appear midway between issues of the literary section, and to deal with the field that New Theater covered. The proposal is as yet in the discussion stage, and we are anxious to know what our readers think of the project. The editorial, literary, and artistic forces necessary to make such a section a worthy continuer of New Theater are available and eager to take on the task. Not available are the financial resources necessary for an undertaking more ambitious, in some respects, than our literary section. Even at a time when the magazine as a whole finds its financial burden most difficult, proposals such as this cannot be rejected out of hand. We believe that this proposed theater arts section ultimately depends upon the solution of the magazine's general financial problem. Meanwhile, however, what we want to know is: Would the readers of NEW MASSES welcome a monthly theater arts section, and would they support us in undertaking this additional work?

"Thanks for letting me in on the ground floor in this investment," writes Harry Lessin in ordering a batch of tickets for our forthcoming night of music. And he continues: "I've just been aching for an affair of this nature, and when you included a real swing band that's got one of the best rhythm sections in the business, you touched me to the quick. I'm talking about the affair on Sunday evening, February 6. Here's hoping there are millions feeling this way—at least enough to fill the theater to the rafters—and why not?"

And it looks as if Lessin's hopes are coming true, for with the affair still five weeks off, an unprecedented number of reservations have come in. So enthusiastic has the reaction been that even out-of-towners are making an effort to attend, and long-distance calls for tickets have ceased to be unusual. Remember the date, Sunday evening, February 6.

J. D. Cornwall, a reader in Toronto, Canada, where the magazine was suppressed for a short time, thinks that the "NEW MASSES is more and more required reading for anyone and everyone who wishes really to follow the struggle for progress on this continent and in the world at large. In spite of all talk of empire, the destinies of Canada and the United States are intimately linked, and we, the people, must work them out side by side. You are doing good work—more power to you."

What's What

OUR editorial on poetry (issue of December 21) has evoked a flood of comment from our readers, poets and non-poets alike. Some of these remarks are to be found in the Readers' Forum of this issue. Others will be printed in subsequent issues. In the meantime Michael Gold will speak on "Poetry for America" at the initial forum held under the auspices of the Young Labor Poets of America, on Sunday night, January 9, at 122 East 27th Street, New York City. He will discuss present trends in American poetry, and indicate the kind of verse needed in the present period in America. Five new poems, written by young poets of the group, will be read by the authors.

Ruth Gikow, John Groth, Helen Ludwig, Irving Marantz, Winifred Milius, and Eugene Morley, all of whom have frequently contributed to the NEW MASSES, are among those whose lithographs will be exhibited at the Municipal Art Galleries, 3 East 67th Street, New York. The exhibition will continue through January 23.

Jack Chen, whose drawings have also appeared in our pages, will speak on "Modern Chinese Culture" at an exhibition of modern Chinese graphic art—woodcuts, drawings, and cartoons—which opens at the A. C. A. Gallery in New York City on Sunday, January 9. Thirty young artists are represented (only three are over thirty years of age), all of whom are active in the Chinese liberation movement. The exhibition, which is sponsored by the American Artists' Congress and the Friends of the Chinese People, has been shown in Shanghai, Moscow, London, and Edinburgh. Besides Mr. Chen, Margaret Bourke-White and Isamu Noguchi will speak at the Sunday opening.

The recent arrest in Budapest of three Hungarian authors has been protested by the League of American Writers. In a letter to John Pelenyi, Hungarian ambassador in Washington, the writers' organization said:

"Please transmit to your government our profoundly indignant protest against the jailing by Hungarian authorities of the writers Geza Feja, Imre Kovacs, and Gyula Illyes.

"Those of our members acquainted with Hungarian literature have found the books of Feja and Kovacs illuminating, dignified, apparently just and accurate descriptions of life in the Hungarian village. The peasantry of your country was bound to find its voice, and we rejoiced to hear that voice so eloquent, so passionately sincere, so worthy of the best in Hungary's splendid literary traditions. We hope that the countrymen of Sandor Petofi have not forgotten the heritage of their great poet in so short a time, and we join our gifted Hungarian contemporaries Zsigmond Moricz and Lajos Zilahy in protesting the unjust imprisonment of our fellow writers.

"The League of American Writers resents and regrets the jailing of our colleagues in your country, and the suppression of their books, and we pledge to use our influence on their behalf."

The credit line under the drawing "For the New Year," which appeared in last week's issue incorrectly read "E. Davis." The artist is Charles Davis.

Who's Who

JAMES R. MACREADY has been active in the New Jersey labor movement for many years. . . . Joseph Starobin played a prominent role in the formation of the American Student Union. . . . Jack Conroy, best known for his novel, *The Disinherited,* is at present engaged on a study of the South as part of his Guggenheim Fellowship project. . . . William F. Dunne has for the past twenty-five years been active in the farmer and labor movement of the Northwest. A member of the Montana state legislature in 1919, Dunne introduced for the first time in any state legislature a resolution calling for withdrawal of American troops in Siberia and recognition of the Soviet government. Tried under a war-time sedition law, Dunne employed Senator Wheeler as one of his attorneys.

Flashbacks

"THESE are the times that try men's souls: the summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman." Thus began a radical pamphlet of 1776. It was Tom Paine's *Common Sense,* the manifesto of the first American Revolution, which appeared on January 10, six months before the Declaration of Independence. . . . A strike, modern in its technique and sweeping in its achievements began a new chapter in American history on January 11, 1912. The I.W.W.'s and militant rank and filers that day called a general textile walkout in Lawrence, Mass., including twenty-five thousand workers belonging to twenty-eight different nationalities. . . . Admiral Kolchak, White Russian leader, threw in the sponge on January 8, 1920. That day he boarded a second-class railway carriage which was rolling directly away from the Red Army, and the Moscow wireless correctly reported "liquidation of the Eastern Front."

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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NEW MASSES
JANUARY 11, 1938

Hall Hendrix

Hague Does the Reactionary

By James R. Macready

NOT so long ago things ran smoothly in Jersey City. For twenty years Mayor Frank Hague sat back and enjoyed the considerable benefits that accrue from an efficient, smooth-running political machine. The nest he had feathered with steadfast diligence was designed to weather any storm. When Mayor Hague first sighted the ominous clouds of the C.I.O., he anticipated merely another downpour of criticism and a not too violent gust of resentment against his citadel. But instead of passing, the downpour turned into a cloudburst, and the gust became a cyclone.

Hague had anticipated the C.I.O. as just another assault on labor. Labor had been easily turned back before. But the C.I.O. neither heeded threats nor was open to bribery, and force seemed to consolidate the opposition. Far bigger machines of corruption than Hague's had collapsed before the C.I.O. and its allies—Tammany, for example, and the company-town political juggernauts in the steel areas. In the wake of the C.I.O. came the rising political consciousness not only of the workers, but of professional, middle-class, and progressive people as well.

MAYOR HAGUE'S life has been devoted to building a political machine in his home town of Jersey City. He started from scratch—if anything a little behind scratch. Born January 17, 1876, in the broken-down "horseshoe" section of Jersey City, Frank spent his early days in the slum district of the suburban factory town which later he ruled as mayor for over twenty years. The boy showed more aptitude as a hoodlum than he did as a student. At fifteen he had become involved in the petty racket of trafficking in pawn-shop tickets, and had qualified as a junior member of the notorious Red Tiger Gang. In four years the ambitious youngster had wheedled himself into a constable's job, which paid no salary but opened avenues to new sources of income and which was at least an introduction to the political life of the city. By 1904 he had risen to deputy sheriff. Then unfortunately he felt impelled to perjure his good name by testifying falsely in defense of his crony, "Red" Dugan, accused of forgery. Hague lost his job and was fined one hundred dollars.

This blow dampened his spirits, but he was not one to let public disgrace crush him for long. He wangled himself the Democratic leadership of Jersey City's Second Ward. As a small-time boss, he formed an alliance with the mayor of Jersey City, Otto Witpenn, now dead. Witpenn's problem was to supplant the Democratic machine of Bob Davis, which was showing signs of weakness. The new combination did well and Witpenn appointed his young supporter Custodian of the City Hall, a title that accompanied a salary of two thousand dollars a year. Three years later, in 1911, Frank Hague was elected to the Street and Water Board at three thousand dollars a year. He now had a fully developed taste for politics and was rapidly learning the ropes.

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By 1913 he ventured to run for Commissioner and was elected; his new position paid five thousand dollars a year, and carried with it the title of Director of Safety and control of the police and fire departments. Hague was definitely in. So much so that in four years he could doublecross his old ally Mayor Witpenn and get himself elected mayor of Jersey City at the salary of $6250, later raised to eight thousand dollars. That was in 1917. Jersey City has had no other mayor since.

WHEN he stepped into Witpenn's shoes, Frank Hague was determined to make the office mean something. It took planning to keep the job and expand it into the most powerful position in the state. Hague settled down in office for what he was determined would be an indefinite stay, and went about the business of consolidation with a view toward expansion.

His method was political bribery. Not behind-the-scenes gifts for favors done, but open appointments whose purpose it was to silence criticism by making the critic dependent on a city job—and hence on Hague. No matter what the profession or position of the critic, he could be bought, with no expense to Hague, simply by conferring on the recalcitrant an honor that entitled him to a substantial salary. Of course Hague was not worried about the two-bit critics among the workers or small middle-class elements—he could take care of them through intimidation. But the more influential must be made his dependents.

He built up the largest and best paid police force in the world for a city of comparable size. That put "law and order" on Hague's side. He appointed all the magistrates and chancellors; automatically the law courts began handing down decisions in no way incompatible to Hague's reign. He organized the voters—and added a few extra votes by bringing in floaters and by seeing to it that his supporters voted several times for his ticket. In the last gubernatorial campaign, the independent candidate publicly stated that Hague allowed the more ardent to vote as many as 135 times, a statement which went unchallenged and testified to the mayor's generosity. He built a medical center with city funds; hostile doctors were suddenly appointed to city jobs and their anti-Hague attitude disappeared with the opportunity to practice science more profitably. Lawyers who disliked Hague's methods were appointed to city departments where they advised other city officials for ample remuneration. Some called this the "Hamill" method, after James A. Hamill whose objections to Hague disappeared once he was named corporation counsel at twelve thousand a year. Other lawyers were made receivers in bankruptcy cases.

D. Frederick

The Dears, two brothers owning the powerful Jersey City *Journal*, opposed Hague's election in 1929. The battle was bitter. Hague won, and immediately appointed one brother a judge of the Court of Errors and Appeals. Since then the *Journal* has been a supporter of Hague's enlightened rule. And reporters in Jersey City either go along with the machine or terminate their careers as newspapermen. Those who survive find it best to take the small benefits thrown to them by the mayor.

Even some clergymen could be bought. Mayor Hague's town is 60 to 70 percent Catholic; the support of certain of the top clergy is valuable; a well-timed sermon on the merits of the mayor is extremely useful. And so every key priest in the city is appointed chaplain to one department or another—salary two thousand to three thousand dollars a year—and dancing is prohibited in Jersey City on Sundays and throughout the week in eating establishments, so that certain of the clergy can run dances and bring their parishioners closer to religion. The Protestant ministers and the Jewish rabbis fare well too—those of them that have influence. Some receive automobiles with city employees as chauffeurs. Or they too become chaplains, like the minister who ran a public forum until Mayor Hague appointed him chaplain of the fire department.

There are exceptions, such stubborn men as Rabbi Benjamin Plotkin of the Temple Emanuel who called Mayor Hague a "fascist dictator." Despite offers of chaplainships and pressure and threats, Rabbi Plotkin continued to denounce Hague. But the elders of the Jewish Community Center saw the light and told Rabbi Plotkin that they could no longer rent him a hall as "the Community Center was pressed for space." Unfortunately for the elders, the supporters of the Community Center resented the decision, and as a result Rabbi Plotkin still holds meetings in the Center hall, but his position is hardly secure.

The machine grew, but to keep it greased Mayor Hague needed money and plenty of it. Besides, his personal needs were not inconsiderable and if others accepted bounty, he saw no reason to exclude himself. Back in 1924 he began to take an interest in Theodore Brandle—"Teddy" to his friends—that versatile president of the State Building Trades Council who found time to go into business for himself as moving spirit behind the Branleygran Co., dealers in insurance and second largest holding company in the state. As director-general of the employers' Iron League of New Jersey (who could more aptly advise the large industrialists than a leader of labor?), Brandle shared gifts of ten thousand dollars in 1927 and 1928, in addition to his salary of twenty-six hundred dollars a year from the League, and the one hundred and fifty dollars a week his union paid for guidance. In addition, it cost union members one dollar a day to support various thugs useful to Brandle in conducting union affairs—and protecting his business interests.

Brandle became Hague's political lieutenant. The association proved profitable to both—contracts for building construction can often be made to pay dividends to the contractor (Mayor Hague had by this time interests in contracting firms) and to the racketeering head of a union who supplied the labor. In fact, it proved so profitable to Robert Brindell of New York—one of those racketeers of whom Teddy Brandle may be called a "disciple—that Brindell was one of the rulers of New York politics for years until he was sent to Sing Sing for certain more audacious deals. Brandle stayed out of the penitentiary, but in every other way he was second only to New York's czar. And his closest associate for years was Frank Hague, mayor of Jersey City.

THE BREAK between the two came just after Brandle handed out sixty thousand dollars to keep Hague out of a federal penitentiary. Hague, by this time, had become a rich man. He was maintaining a mansion at Deal, N. J., a duplex apartment in Jersey City, and a suite in the Waldorf-Astoria, New York City, which alone cost him forty-three thousand dollars in 1935. The federal government finally demanded sixty thousand in income taxes from this man whose nominal salary as mayor was only eight thousand dollars a year. Hague was faced with the threat of indictment and almost certain conviction. A check for sixty thousand dollars forestalled the prosecution—and this check was drawn on the account of Theodore Brandle, not Frank Hague.

Brandle expected to get his money back. He even asked Hague for it when it was slow in coming. Hague answered vaguely, and advised Brandle to wait. Hague decided to liquidate his debt to Brandle finally by liquidating Brandle. He set about it by withholding the easy money with which Brandle was able to hold his machine in line.

It is easy to imagine Brandle's astonishment when his colleague, Hague, did not even offer to let him in on the construction of the then projected Pulaski three-mile skyway. Instead, the Marshall-McClintic Co., no friend of union labor—even of the Brandle brand—was given the contract. The job, all non-union, could have been done for seven million dollars but eventually cost the state sixteen million dollars, the biggest grab in years. Brandle stormed and threatened. Hague, faced with an imminent break, relented somewhat and offered him a bribe of a quarter million dollars, though estimates of the offer ran up to a full million. Brandle decided to give battle. He set up a camp of pickets adjoining the barricades of the Marshall-McClintic scabs. Fights between the scabs and pickets flared up, one strikebreaker died. The war between Brandle and Hague was on in earnest.

Hague smashed that strike. He had to smash it not only to make good his boast that Jersey City was the ideal haven for "new" industry but to take Brandle out of circulation. He indicted forty iron workers on charges of murder. They were acquitted only after the strike had been broken by wholesale violence. Within a year, Brandle was reduced to a small-time organizer—with an avocation: suing Hague for that sixty thousand dollars. The iron workers' local was thrown into receivership. Other building trades locals were

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Joseph Serrano

"A new 'moral climate.' What an idea!"

isolated and destroyed one by one when Hague, now the crusader against "crooked unionism," prosecuted union officials on charges of "irregularities and defalcations." When a local went bankrupt, the receivers never failed to be Mayor Hague's close friends.

"EVERYTHING FOR INDUSTRY" read the signs on the roads into Jersey City. That became Mayor Hague's boast after the Central Labor Union in Jersey City had become a virtual creature of City Hall. The city administration advertised in papers such as the New York *Herald Tribune* and *Times,* as well as in the swankier *Fortune,* that Jersey City could rescue sweatshops from "labor trouble" with a fine supply of "contented workers."

There was one flaw in this Hague blackmail system. It became ever more expensive. More and more competitors had to be bribed with more jobs in the city service. Meanwhile the city's credit had nosedived with the depression. Hague had to resort to large-scale borrowing to keep his army of political parasites in coffee and crullers, but he was limited by law to 10 percent of the assessed valuation of taxable property. To the accompaniment of cries of anguish by the open-shop industries, he finally had to raise the valuation. He had to cut the salaries of municipal employees, not once, but three times, and in some cases as much as 35 percent. The higher valuation forced twelve thousand Jersey City home-owners to lose their property through tax sales, and that too cut into the tax revenue.

Hague had built himself a Frankenstein monster. Despite the tax boost and the salary cuts, the city's gross debt rose above ninety-three million dollars. The 1936 budget for Jersey City was $23,233,978. With a population of three hundred and sixteen thousand, Jersey City has a budget five times that of New Orleans which has a population of one hundred thousand more. The Jersey City budget is six times that of Indianapolis which has fifty thousand more.

Hague's way out of this financial dilemma was simply to raise the blackmail ante. Jersey City had to attract more and more open-shop factories which would in turn be willing to pay more and more in taxes for "protection" against organized labor. It wasn't enough to break Brandle. It wasn't enough to corrupt the Central Labor Union. Organized labor had to be eliminated, root and branch. Then perhaps Hague could keep his machine from breaking open at the seams.

THIS IS WHERE the C.I.O. came in. Hague learned that it couldn't be bribed and it couldn't be beaten into insensibility like a common racketeer. Hague warned the C.I.O. to stay out, but he was no more successful than Canute had been when confronted with another tidal wave. Textile workers began to organize in West New York, a Hague province. Then organization started in the chemical and steel factories outside Jersey City. The shoe, steel, chemical, electrical, and radio unions marched right into the capital of Hague's empire and actually began to distribute leaflets.

Hague has decided that it's either his machine or the C.I.O. That machine rests on blackmail from factory owners who are willing to pay tribute in order to break the law. It is impossible to tell where the open shop ends and where crime begins in Jersey City. That is why a clean, progressive labor movement in New Jersey opens far wider political perspectives than simple collective bargaining. Exery taxpayer, especially the home-owners, will breathe with fervent relief, if only in the matter of taxes.

Immediately, the industrialists and the reactionary press, the bribed clergymen, priests, doctors, lawyers, magistrates, and petty officials lined up behind Hague. Supporting him, too, was the A. F. of L. hierarchy which would rather tolerate a Hague than accept a C.I.O. victory. Frank Hague found himself pushed into the vanguard of the reactionary offensive in this country by the necessity of saving his machine.

He was met by labor and by labor's supporters. The American Civil Liberties Union and the International Labor Defense, coöperating with the Hudson County Committee for Labor Defense, challenged Hague. The Communist Party and other progressive organizations offered the C.I.O. all support. Rank and file workers of the A. F. of L. united with the C.I.O. to resist Hague's terror, and went even further by laying the basis for the organization of an American Labor Party in New Jersey

"I am the law" was the expression with which Hague, now a symbol of the national drive to destroy the labor unions, met constitutional objections to his violence. The expression goes to the heart of the matter. Upon the restoration of an independent and legal labor movement rests the restoration of simple constitutional guarantees in Jersey City. This, then, is no narrow fight of the C.I.O. It is the fight of every person with a stake in decent, democratic conditions in a city at the very center of the greatest industrial region in the United States.

Hague is furious, frantic, and worried. But only more unity, consistency, and fighting-power on the part of the progressives and laboring people of New Jersey and neighboring states will make it possible to write: Hague is through.

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The Coroner of Burgos

By James Hawthorne

ANTONIO RUIZ VILAPLANA was the sort of man an ambitious lawyer in feudal Spain would have to be. He hadn't, you may be sure, become judicial secretary to the court of Burgos in the year 1937 without demonstrating his "trustworthiness." He would have justified himself, had anyone he really respected challenged him, by pointing to his wife and kids in Madrid. But if you pressed him, he would have added (with the air of a Rotarian whispering, "Besides, there's money in it!"), "I'm going places, too. I have been promised the post of judicial secretary in Madrid." And that's no trifling matter for a young fellow who first entered the profession of judicial secretary in 1928.

They hadn't been bad years, Don Antonio reflected. He had placed high in the civil service competition to start with, and that had won him his first post in the village of Riaza, Segovia Province. Victory in a new competition had taken him, four years later, to the bustling industrial seaport of El Ferrol in Galicia. For a short time he had been drafted to the black persecution courts of the Lerroux-Gil Robles régime. To Don Antonio's credit it can be said that he didn't like the work on the Madrid special court for the repression of terrorism, but he carried out his masters' orders well enough to earn the reward of an appointment to Burgos in November 1935. At that time the growing People's Front filled the masses of the Spanish capital with new hope and frightened Don Antonio who wanted no political entanglements to imperil his chances for steady promotion. So he was very pleased to be transferred from turbulent Madrid to peaceful Burgos.

We who have been raised in the tradition of the picture postcards will find it hard to surrender our illusion of a glamorous "Old Spain." But Don Antonio found Burgos—even before it became the capital of rebel Spain—horribly like Zion, Ill. A few days after he took up his duties there, he received a visit from a professional colleague.

"Listen, old fellow. You haven't lived much in places like this and there are a lot of things you don't know. I'm going to talk to you like a brother for your own good. . . . Now mind you, I'm not talking on my own account. I'm as liberal as they come, and nothing you do upsets me. I live well, go on my little jags in Madrid, and the world's my oyster. But here in Burgos? Not a false move! That's why I think you're on the wrong track!"

"But I don't get you," protested Don Antonio.

"For instance. You've been here several days? Yes? And you haven't made a formal visit to the bishop!"

"No. To tell the truth I didn't know . . ."

"Exactly. Just what I'm driving at. Go and visit him. The next day he will send you the formal 'benediction' that the protocol demands, and then you won't have to bother with that any more. You send him a New Year's card every year, and that's that."

Don Antonio thanked his new acquaintance and urged him to advance any other tip that might save future embarrassment.

"Very well. There's another thing—a stupid trifle—but people are talking. . . . You read the *Heraldo de Madrid* [a mildly Republican newspaper], don't you? . . . Well, don't do it in public. Do what I do, so people won't look cross-eyed at you. I like to read the *Vanguardia* of Barcelona, but since people here haven't much use for the Catalans, I buy it in a little store near my house and hide it in my pocket. No one has to know that I read it."

Don Antonio's ambitious soul adjusted itself patiently to such irksome restrictions. He even gave up his passion for mass in little out-of-the-way churches and accepted the social necessity of regular mass in the great cathedral. And when he danced at an affair in his own hotel one night, he was not at all indignant at next day's warning: "In Burgos married men don't dance with other women—in public!"

On July 17, 1936, news of the military rising in Africa came to Burgos. Don Antonio was alarmed. Suppose he were forced to choose quickly between the government and the rebels, and suppose he were so unfortunate as to pick the loser? He went to the governor to find out how things stood. Thinking about it now, he recalls that "the governor was a poor fellow, courteous, ingenuous, excessively trustful; the classic type of republican governor." And the classic type of republican governor buried his head in the sands of over-confidence in the manner of another classic bird: "Oh, there's nothing to it. A lunatic idea of Yagüe's, but he has no contact with the mainland. There are no ramifications of the plot here." In official circles Don Antonio had already heard the boast that Yagüe—a home-town boy—would be in Burgos at the head of an army within two days.

The generals did not wait on Colonel Yagüe. They declared martial law, and the city was theirs. General Batet, Civil Guard Commander Colonel Mena, the civil governor, the president of the provincial legislature, and others who remained loyal to the government were promptly arrested. Don Antonio found himself summoned to a meeting of all public functionaries. There he was offered the choice between treason to his country or imprisonment—and death. Prudent Don Antonio chose to transfer his allegiance to the rebels. No hero's death for him.

Don Antonio had sworn out of fear, but he had no profound convictions of any kind and wanted only to prosper under the new regime. No one came to bother him. He was trusted and remained at his post. It was the job itself that subtly changed. As wholesale murder was the order of the day, Don Antonio in his official capacity was forever sitting in inquest over unidentified bodies. He became, to all intents and purposes, the coroner of Burgos. Until July 18 Burgos had been a millionaire's haven. Not a clash, not a strike, not the least interference with religious processions, not the faintest echo of the angry voices raised in the Cortes. Then as martial law was proclaimed, the trouble began. A truckload of Burgos's own fascist militias—the "Legionnaires of Albiñana"—halted a mason's helper.

"Hey, you Socialist," they challenged. "Long live Spain! Long live the army!"

"Long live the republic!" replied the irritated worker, and they shot him down in his tracks. He was the first of thousands to fall victim to the feudal fascist blood-lust.

Don Antonio seems to have had an excellent stomach. He let the dead bury their dead. Once in a while he shuddered. When he found the rebels carrying out their executions on the grounds of the suburban church whose mass he used to hear, he was annoyed. He was worried, too, about his acquaintance, the nationally known folk musician and poet—Antonio José. But he was so reluctant to identify himself with anyone frowned upon by the feudal authorities that he did nothing, and one day Antonio José was released from prison—to be murdered in the street. It appears that he had once been musical editor of a magazine that came into conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities and now vengeance was theirs. The coroner sighed, but not long after that General Emilio Mola made a public address, and Don Antonio was simply carried away by his eloquence. After all, there was hope. The war and the rebellion had unpleasant aspects, but one was not uncomfortable—and once the war had been won, Mola and Franco would build such a lovely world for ambitious lawyers to live in. The fascists would rule then, and it was not they, he consoled himself, who were responsible for the atrocities. The Requetés, the Civil Guard, the army, and the police were responsible for that, but no, no, no, not the fascists.

Yes indeed, Don Antonio was adapting himself nicely to the "Nationalist" world. When the rebels would win—and how could they fail with such abundant help from Rome and Berlin?—he would be assigned the coveted post of judicial secretary in Madrid. He would

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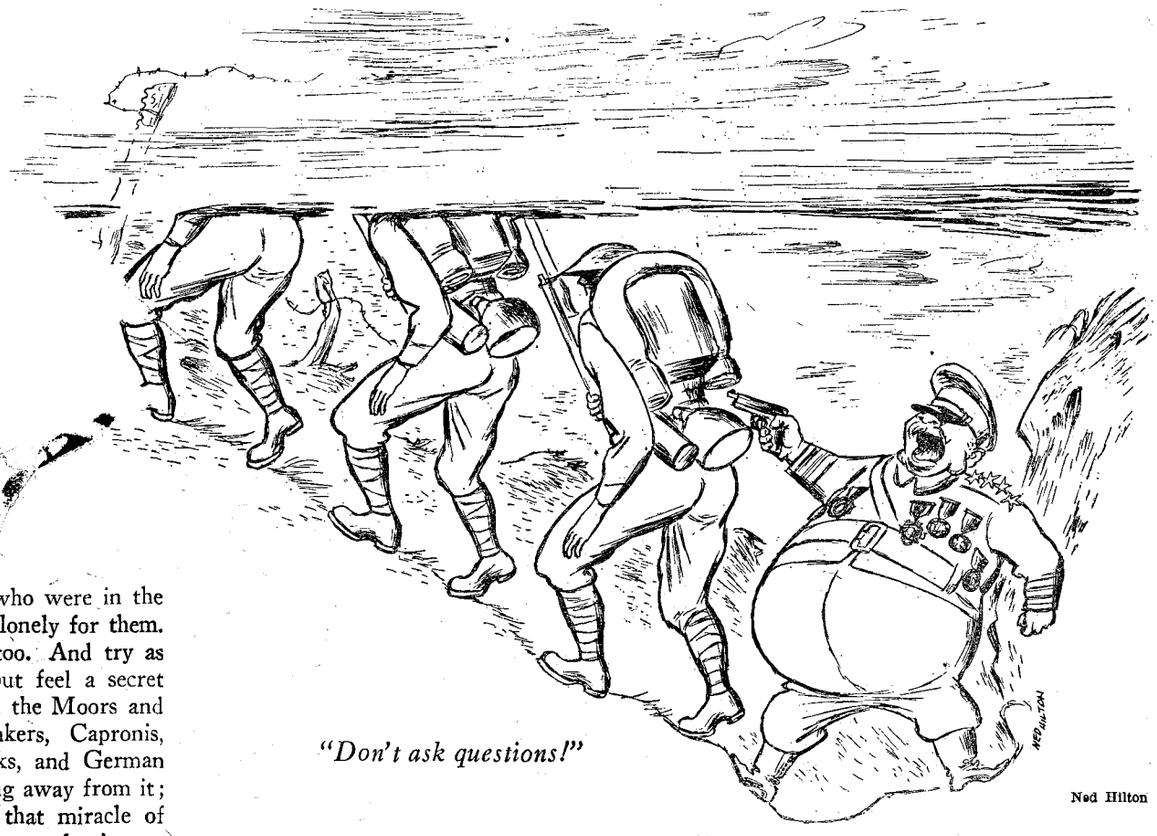

"Don't ask questions!"

Ned Hilton

ildren who were in the
He *was* lonely for them.
Madrid, too. And try as
help but feel a secret
that Madrid had alted the Moors and
naires, defied t Junkers, Capronis,
s. Heinkels, whipp tanks, and German
ry. There was n tting away from it;
that incredible stubbor ss, that miracle of
Madrid was a *Spanish* ory over foreigners.

Don Antonio knew ll sorts of prudent people who obviously red that same dangerous pride in Madrid it it wasn't the sort of thing to talk about. ill, he did know a chap who had gone to t rouble of collecting every false report, every erence in the whole rebel press to "the captu f Madrid." Burgos had celebrated the "fall" November 7, 1936, and the capital had "f n" scores of times since. His friend's scrap-book had thousands of items by now. But Don Antonio didn't let all this get the best of him and his future. He went right on serving his new masters, or rather he went right on trying not to notice that his new masters had been supplanted by the Germans and the Italians.

In the long run, it was no go. The foreigners were too much to swallow. The coroner's business was certainly flourishing, but what was the use of choking down your disgust, obediently writing "unknown" on the death certificates of men whose identity was not in the slightest doubt, and holding inquests day and night if you couldn't have the comforts and the respect due judicial authority? If you came home tired from certifying the bodies found in an empty field and discovered that you had been chucked out of your hotel room to make room for a Nazi who wasn't even a militarist but only a salesman for a German firm? If you went on a business trip and had to stand in the corridor along with your Spanish captain friend and other Spanish soldiers because the compartments were reserved for German and Italian officers?

After all, you hadn't really *meant* to betray your country when you saved your skin by meekly acknowledging the rebel regime. It made you blush to see the roads, villages, and railway stations glaringly labeled with signs: *Posta, Commandamento,* and *Corpo di Guardia* —in Italian! It was all you could do to swallow your indignation when you found Italian sentinels and carabinieri posted at the entrance and exit of every town to "control" your movements. Don Antonio found himself growing hypersensitive to foreign insult.

One night he went to the Casino of Burgos. Ordinarily the Casino was for foreigners, because the "natives" had to clear out at midnight and only the foreigners could stay on through the hours that the gambling was really hot. The *indigenes* had been invited tonight, as a special treat, to celebrate the fall of Bilbao. It would have been suspicious and dangerous for Don Antonio to absent himself. He watched, with especial disgust, the way the feudal ladies and their priest-ridden daughters fawned on the foreign officers. Were the foreigners, he found himself asking, really just allies to whom the Spaniards owed deep gratitude? Or was the prostitution of Spanish womanhood to the foreign favorites the only Spanish feature of the "Nationalist" regime? As if in answer to his doubts came a toast: "Long live Germany; long live Italy!" And a reply as the Germans and Italians raised their glasses: "Long live the pretty Spanish women!" The "pretty Spanish women" smirked and cooed. The men didn't like it too much. Don Antonio sneaked out of the ballroom.

Straying through the narrow streets of the old town, he found himself in the red-light district. The proprietresses stood in the doorways of their brothels. Don Antonio recognized most of them as old court acquaintances, always up for trial on one count or another. There was Lola. Hers was one of the "better" houses, reserved tonight for the Germans. There was an awful row at Luisa's where a non-com of the Spanish fascist Phalanx was being thrown out. So he didn't give a damn if the place *was* reserved for the Italians, huh? Take that, and that. And so it went. Only the lowest of the dives—Casa de la Peque—was available to the Spaniards if they could squeeze in after the Moors.

Don Antonio caught the allegory. There was still a door open to the Spaniard. The door marked "Exit." On June 30, 1937, he drove to France in his own car. He left in good standing with the rebels, equipped with a regulation safe-conduct. As he crossed the border, the Civil Guard saluted. This was indeed no disguised Red making his escape. This was the judicial secretary of Burgos, in practice the coroner, taking a little holiday, and he would soon return. But Don Antonio had had enough. Still politically very confused, still inclined to defend the fascist Phalanx, he sat down to write a book about his experiences before returning — to Madrid. Madrid, red, black, brown, or green, but Spanish.

Señor Don Antonio Ruiz Vilaplana, lawyer, senior dean of the Illustrious College of Judicial Secretaries, and sole secretary of the Primary Court of Burgos, consulting secretary of the Burgos Requisition Commission and the Burgos Industrial Court, published his book in Paris at the Editions Imprimerie Coöpérative Etoile. He called it *Doy Fé,* which may be translated, "Witness My Hand and Seal." It first appeared in Spanish and has probably since been done in French. It is the most authentic document to come from rebel territory since the war began, and I can only hope for its early publication in English.

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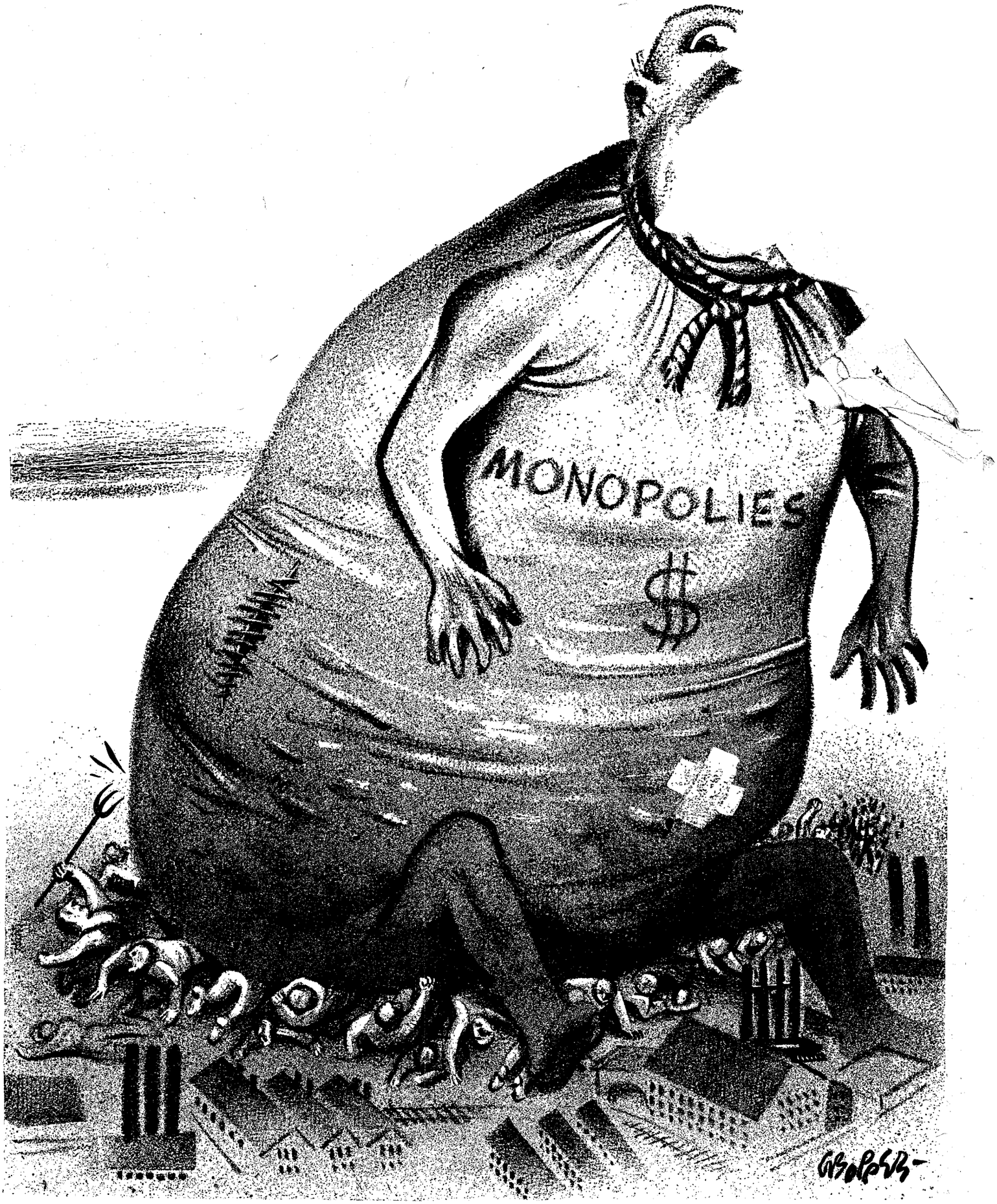

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MASSES
SHED 1911

S, CROCKETT JOHNSON,
ON, BRUCE MINTON,
TAYLOR.

AEL GOLD,
INEIDER,

..., seemingly fin- ... has revived into the ... crucial, conflict of the en- ... war. The insurgents, having ... a surprise defeat of major proportions, threw into the breach the whole weight of men and material accumulated over many months for their own promised offensive. Despite two feet of snow, near zero weather, and occasional blizzards, the battle has proceeded for more than a week though the loss of lives and war-stock must be tremendous.

It appears from the still contradictory and confused cable reports that the insurgents have regained some ground but, as we go to press, the loyalists still hold the town. Teruel itself is no longer the main prize. The very concentration of forces on the rebel side has converted the battle into a test of staying power in which the rebels' failure to retrieve their lost ground may open the road to Saragossa for the loyalists. There is no gainsaying, however, the fierce determination of the insurgent high command to regain Teruel at any cost. Unquestionably, they are taking a great risk by bringing so much pressure to bear on Teruel, but they too figure upon breaking the backbone of their opponent's resistance.

Not until fuller information comes to light can a definitive evaluation of the Teruel battle be made. Meanwhile, it should be remembered that one of the loyalist objectives in starting the original drive was to head off an imminent insurgent offensive. The rebels seem to have lost all chance of an early offensive by expending so much effort on a front not of their own choosing.

Changes in China

THE political readjustment of the Chinese government goes on apace. General Chiang Kai-shek has resigned as head of the Executive Yuan or chamber in favor of H. H. Kung, formerly the minister of finance. Chiang, however, remains as commander-in-chief of the Chinese army, with the capable Pai Chung-hsi as vice-commander. The other posts were distributed among old stand-bys of the Nanking régime, with General Ho Ying-chin heading the War Ministry and Dr. Wang Chung-hui the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. One of the most important shifts was that of Chen Li-fu from the head of the political department of the general staff to that of the Ministry of Education.

Most of these names mean little outside of China but they are nevertheless significant. H. H. Kung, Ho Ying-chin, and Chen Li-fu are generally considered among the least militant elements in the government. Their retention in various posts indicates that no fundamental shake-up has taken place. But it is significant that an attempt has been made to reshuffle the leadership even if in a somewhat limited way. There is no Communist in the government, but the enlarged Committee of Councilors on National Defense may contain some.

It is heartening, however, that the government has practically granted an amnesty to all political prisoners by abolishing the reformatories. This move liberates many hundreds of Communists and other progressives imprisoned before the Japanese aggression. There is every indication that the masses of China will not be content with its leadership in the government until it genuinely reflects the will of the people. There will be further adjustments that will go farther than this one. But there are many who hope that events will move faster so that the defense of China will meet with no internal obstruction.

Why Unity Failed

AN editorial in the *Advance,* official publication of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, has cleared away some of the confusion in certain sections of the trade-union movement over the breakdown of A. F. of L.-C.I.O. unity negotiations. "We did desire and desire now peace and unity," the editorial declared. ". . . But we want unity that will make it possible to continue the mass organization of the American wage earners which was so well begun by the organizing drives of the C.I.O. and its affiliated unions."

The editorial summarizes the events leading up to the refusal by the A. F. of L. committee, dominated by the executive council, "to meet halfway the C.I.O. proposals." *Justice,* published by the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union, had given the impression that the A. F. of L. had agreed to the major C.I.O. peace proposals and that negotiations had failed only because certain technical questions of readmitting C.I.O. unions into the A. F. of L. has remained unsolved.

Coming at this time, when big business is attacking organized labor while it sabotages the New Deal, the misconceptions inherent in the *Justice* analysis confuse the membership of both the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O., and impede the growing unity of the rank and file. It is not a matter of placing blame for the unsuccessful conferences merely for the sake of placing blame: a true understanding of the reasons of the failure—and the editorial in the *Advance* serves this purpose well—will enable workers to bring pressure on the guilty ones and force them to act in a manner that will increase the power of all labor by ending the present stultifying division.

Freedom in Montana

THE case of Professor Philip O. Keeney is only the latest in a long series of violations of academic freedom in the State University of Montana. The natural resources of the state are owned by the Anaconda Copper Mining Co., the Montana Power Co., and their parent, Standard Oil, and these corporations have never hesitated to interfere with the university when they felt that investigations or activities undertaken there threatened to upset their control.

Back in 1915 the liberal administration of President E. B. Craighead was summarily ended because he proposed unification of the various institutions of higher learning in the state, which would have given Montana one strong university instead of seven starved units. In 1920 Professor Louis Levine was fired because a study he had made of state taxes produced conclusions at variance with the brazen tax evasion policy of Anaconda. In 1921 Arthur Fisher, law school instructor, was dismissed because of his activity in publishing a radical newspaper in Missoula. These are only a few of the most outstanding cases. In each case the dismissal was made because of extra-curricular activities, because in one way or another the men involved questioned the control of the state by monopoly capital.

Professor Keeney's dismissal was due simply and solely to his activity in organizing a local of the American Federation of Teachers.

But the times are gone when educators have to fight single-handed against such arbitrary acts. Professor Keeney's case has become a major fighting issue throughout Montana, enlisting the support of organized labor and leaders in the fields of culture and education. The further the case develops the more glaring becomes the betrayal by Senator Burton

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K. Wheeler of those liber[illegible]ples he once professed. He has not rai[illegible]oice against the policy of academic su[illegible]n sponsored by the Anaconda Copper [illegible]'s only too clear that Senator Wheeler's [illegible]nt with the most reactionary forces in [illegible]ntry in his opposition to Roosevelt's Court reform plan has its roots deep in his personal allegiance to the corporations that plunder his home state. William F. Dunne's analysis of the Keeney case in this issue proves this most significant point to the hilt.

Cárdenas Advances

PRESIDENT LÁZARO CÁRDENAS of Mexico is not letting his people down. Within the last few weeks, Cárdenas has made decided progress on two fronts, one external, the other internal. If carried through to a logical conclusion, these advances will mean more to his people than even the far-reaching reforms already accomplished.

In the middle of December, Cárdenas issued a statement to several members of his cabinet and to the directors of his party, commonly known by its initials as the P.N.R. (National Revolutionary Party) proposing a fundamental reorganization of their party. Until now, the P.N.R. has been the "government party," financed largely with dues automatically deducted from the salaries of government employees, and drawing its popular support from the middle class. A special convention of the P.N.R. will be called in July to abolish the compulsory dues and to base the regime more solidly on the workers, peasants, and the army. Although the outlines of the proposal are still vague, it is plain that there exists the real possibility of so transforming the P.N.R. that it will become a genuine people's front organization as required by specific circumstances in Mexico.

Cárdenas is at the same time making strenuous efforts to break the grip of the oil imperialists upon Mexico's industrial set-up. At present, the British control about 70 percent of the output, the American interests (Standard Oil and Sinclair) about 25 percent, and native companies a bare 5 percent. The offensive against the oil companies was launched more than a year ago by the oil workers' demand for substantial increases in wages. The government has supported the workers in their demands; only lately, the Federal Board of Conciliation and Arbitration granted wage increases of slightly more than twenty-six million pesos a year above the level of 1936.

Cárdenas's second step has been to demand a larger share in the companies' profits. Arrangements toward this end have already been made with the British investors, but the fiercest opposition comes from the American owners. Several threats have been made by the American imperialists, but Cárdenas shows no signs of retreating. Eventually, he hopes to oust the foreign trusts altogether. In effect this would deprive the Mexican reactionaries of their chief economic support.

Two Forthcoming Congresses

AND from the Mexican labor movement comes other good news. Vicente Lombardo Toledano, the gifted leader of the Mexican trade union federation, has taken the initiative toward convening a congress of democratic and left-wing parties of Latin America. The intention is to unify the various Latin-American progressives "for the safeguarding of the democratic systems of government which guarantee the liberty of the people and the free exercise of civil rights."

With Vargas in Brazil, Justo in Argentina, and lesser dictatorial lights elsewhere, such a congress is to be greatly applauded. No date has yet been set, but it will be held either in Uruguay or Colombia. A number of acceptances have already been received, notably from the Socialist Party of Uruguay; the Socialist Party, Socialist Workers' Party, and the Radical Party of Argentina; the various people's-front parties in Chile; the Aprista movement in Peru; the parties supporting the present Colombian government; and a number of Central American and Cuban parties. The political parties of the United States have been requested to send fraternal delegations.

No less important will be the Latin-American Labor Congress, to be held immediately following the anti-fascist political congress. Also initiated by the Mexican trade union federation, this latter congress intends to supplement the political alliance with labor unity. It is hoped that internal differences among the various trade unions will not bar an effective alliance against fascism. The accomplishment of these political and labor objectives will certainly help fulfill the conditions for victory over fasc[illegible] hemisphere.

More Than

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So[illegible]rison, government economist for the [illegible]A., will lose their jobs by February 1. These new jobless must be added to the 10,870,000 whom the recent government census, taken between November 16 and November 20, found to be unemployed at that tho[illegible]. This figure, greater by two million first offic[illegible] of L. estimates for the same try—has no[illegible]ed at after a house-to-house facts stand ou[illegible]swers to a government among Negroes w[illegible]ation of test areas difficulty getting on[illegible]tion returned they do, receive relief on[illegible] all other categories; and unem[illegible]ed greatest in areas dominated by the [illegible] duction monopolies.

If the census does nothing else, it has concentrated attention on the increase of layoffs. The Senate Committee on Unemployment and Relief has decided to question Myron C. Taylor of U.S. Steel, William Knudsen of General Motors (who has just announced a layoff of thirty thousand men), and Lammot DuPont, whose curtailments of production are intimately linked to their declared offensive against the New Deal. In addition, the

FACTS ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION — VI

The Achievements of Railway Transport

In 1913 the total length of Russian railways was 58,549 kilometers. In 1936 the length of the railway system of the U.S.S.R. was 85,050 kilometers, an increase of almost 1.5 times.

In 1913 the Russian railways transported 132.4 million tons of freight. In 1936 the U.S.S.R. railways transported 483.2 million tons of freight—almost four times as much as in 1913.

The daily average of carloadings in 1913 was 27.4 thousand cars; in 1936 this figure had reached 86.2 thousand cars, a growth of over three times. This figure is expected to reach 100,000 cars in the fourth quarter of 1937.

In 1913 the Russian railways transported 184.8 million passengers; in 1936 the number of passenger was 991.6 million, an increase of more than five times.

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The Students Reject Isolation

By Joseph Starobin

WHEN by a vote of nearly four to one, the third convention of the American Student Union abandoned its pledge "not to support the United States government in any war it may undertake," it demonstrated the true potentiality of its courageous leadership in student life. Conditions having changed, the A.S.U. revaluated its program and altered its course.

In place of the Oxford pledge, the convention elaborated a series of policy-planks, the essence of which favors "making America a genuine and active force for peace"; advocates "American leadership in naming the aggressors and employing embargoes against them . . . embargoes to include war supplies, raw materials, loans and credits, short of military sanctions." This dramatic reorientation is the culmination of two years of experience and leadership on the American campus. With the removal of the Oxford pledge, the student movement has been directed away from the hara-kiri of isolation. It moves forward to the intensification of its traditional activity against war.

FIVE HUNDRED DELEGATES, several hundred more than in previous years, represented 88 colleges and half as many high schools. The greater number came from out-of-New York schools and were uncommitted to any particular program. They held the balance of voting strength. Nearly two hundred visitors and fraternal delegates attended, of whom over a score were school teachers and university instructors, and a few high school principals. The unprecedented national attention, the newspaper reports and editorial comment, radio broadcasts and newsreels emphasized the importance of the convention and heightened the drama of its deliberations.

Vassar extended every facility of its dormitories, lounges, dining and meeting halls. The first snowfall of the year welcomed the students, quilting the spacious lawns, bending the fir trees, etching the barren elms and giving the broad margins of the hospitable campus the atmosphere of winter holiday. A typical American college, with its venerable red brick buildings ivy covered, its colonial meeting halls and Gothic laboratories, Vassar connotes tradition and academic leisure.

Henry Noble MacCracken, Vassar's president, opened the convention with a short address on the main currents of American education, declaring: "I have no objection to your participation in the movements of your time. What I want you to do is to participate as students, and not as cannon fodder . . . not as spies and scouts for planned movements, drugged by the tyranny of words. . . ." A message from President Roosevelt expressed the hope that the "deliberations be . . . fruitful in making our schools and colleges a genuine fortress of democracy." Telegrams from key figures in the labor and progressive movement seconded this wish. Personal greetings from representatives of the British, Latin American, and Canadian student movements electrified the delegates. In particular, 22-year-old Cæsar Ortiz, instructor of English in the University of Mexico, an intense, explosive personality, brought the meeting to its feet as he shouted, "Imperialism . . . we feel it in our blood, we know it in our bones; all our lives we have been fighting it!"

JOSEPH P. LASH, executive secretary of the union, delivered the main report. Coming from a veteran in student affairs, from one who recently resigned from the Socialist Party after long service, in disagreement with its forlorn program on war and its anemia on Spain, Lash's address was particularly meaningful and dramatic. Meaty, pungent, often bitter, but intensely exciting and clear at all times, the report became the basis for all of the major deliberations, debates, and resolutions of the convention. Scorning "those who have lost faith," the report declared: "we can no longer subscribe to the Oxford pledge . . . with the fascists brandishing their torches of war, the Oxford pledge assumes that the United States is the main instigator of war today. Directing itself solely against the United States government it breeds the illusion that we can separate the struggle to keep the United States out of war from what is going on in the rest of the world. Our concern is to prevent war from spreading, to maintain the peace we have, to restore the peace which has been shattered." Lash insisted that "the primary task of the student movement is not to intone sanctimoniously what it will do when war comes, making advance reservations for martyrdom, but to take action to forestall that condition. The one policy that can prevent our becoming involved in war is collective action to halt the aggressor. We have supported the international people's boycott against Japan. We must support an immediate embargo. Every obstacle must be placed in the way of fascist aggression."

Morton Sholl

Lash proposed the slogan: "Make lisle the style, wear lisle for a while," and then proceeded to several other major problems before the convention. Foremost was the declaration of a program for American education, affirming that "the little red schoolhouse stands in shabby contrast to the modern city school. There is need for a comprehensive federal program for education . . . a minimum requirement is the equalization of expenditures for Negro and white youth . . . federal assistance to a permanent system of free junior colleges and free city colleges . . . utilization of schools as cultural centers that will open the door of learning to citizens throughout their lives . . . the desire for an appreciation of the cultural heritage of the United States . . . the need for health service and adequate sex education." All of which was summed up in the statement "for the realization of the American ideal: complete educational opportunity, a realistic curriculum, and genuine popular control of the schools." The third problem of the convention involved inner organization: problems of membership fluctuation, accurate financial accounting, matters of chapter procedure in planning and executing campaigns.

Lash paid tribute to those fifty students "who quietly departed from our midst to contribute to the fight in Spain," among them prominent A.S.U. leaders such as George Watt of New York and Paul MacEachron of Illinois. Then he announced that of the thirty students elected Rhodes scholars for the coming year, four are members of the A.S.U., two of whom were convention delegates. The range of the Union's activities could not have been better symbolized than by this significant contrast: students fighting in Spain, and members winning Rhodes scholarships.

THE ISSUES WERE debated in commissions and round tables for three days. It was evident that over some questions there would be substantial agreement. On matters such as the formati-

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of student coöperatives, support of Spain and China, organizational questions, extension of work to the high schools, the sessions were largely concerned with exchange of experience, coördination of ideas, and details of formulation.

A symposium on American education assisted the commission to draw up its resolutions. Among the speakers, Dr. Houston, special counsel to the N.A.A.C.P., and Mark Starr, educational director of the I.L.G.W.U., made a particularly strong impression. A meeting of college editors sympathetic to the Student Union resolved to form an intercollegiate press association. The Columbia *Spectator* was censured for carrying advertisements of the Horn and Hardart Company in view of the Automat strike. Plans were made to support labor struggles, and resolutions urged unity between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O.

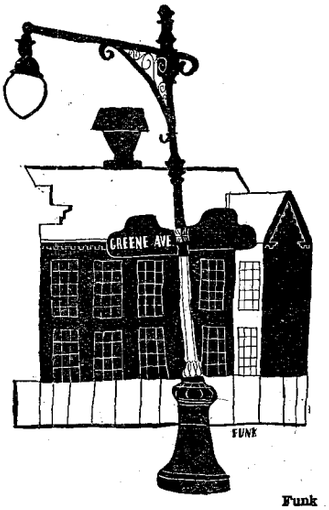
The convention was divided on two problems. One was the peace program, and the other political action. The second problem was settled in a separate commission, in a declaration favoring support of the mainstream of progressive political action, but allowing local chapters complete autonomy.

It was on the peace question that fireworks developed. As the delegates walked from building to building, idled and smoked in hallways, or hurried to meals, the discussion on the Oxford pledge and a positive anti-war stand assumed ever more exciting proportions. Delegates outshouted and interrupted one another, quoting chapter and verse. Delegations committed to no stand split wide open. After speeches by the Spanish consul in New York and a representative of the Chinese people, the debate intensified. The minority groups caucused until all hours. Literature on every position was sold publicly in the meeting room lobby. Trotskyites, Socialists, Lovestonites, pacifists published mimeographed manifestos, new editions appearing every morning. The Harvard delegation published a compromise proposal, opposing the Oxford pledge, but qualifying collective security. By Thursday morning, December 30, it became clear that the majority of the delegates opposed isolation, while the opposition to collective security embraced the Thomas-Socialists, a handful of Trotskyites and other splinter groups.

ON THURSDAY AFTERNOON, the Socialists brought up heavy artillery. Norman Thomas appealed to the convention not to abandon the Oxford pledge. Calling his whole life to witness, wringing every metaphor limp and dry, employing the entire range of his familiar calisthenics, he intoned calamity and disaster. Why, he pleaded, did the convention have to change its mind on its peace program? Was it not obvious that until the capitalist system is overthrown, wars will always be with us? Would it not be nobler to meet doom with clarity of conscience rather than attempt to influence capitalist governments? After all, he thundered, is there a difference between the capitalist democracies and fascism? Thomas made one of the most powerful of his speeches, blistering forth the conviction of his own futility, throwing the full measure of his passion and weight of his prestige into the effort to sway the convention.

He was followed by Professor Frederick Schuman, of Williams College, who launched into an utterly eclectic address, in the most complicated and often cryptic syntax. He astonished and confused the audience with quotations from T. S. Eliot to the effect that the wasteland of the western world is doomed to destruction. Agreeing that fascism is the main enemy of civilization, he insisted that it could be brought to its knees only by war. Denying other alternatives, he reiterated that as far as he was concerned such a war might take place tomorrow. He practically appealed for enlistment to get it over with as soon as possible. Schuman divided the world into "madmen" and "paralytics," completely obscuring the essential fact of the actual and potential strength of the capitalist democracies. Drawing no conclusions from the admitted vulnerability of the fascist nations, he discounted the boycott, or any sort of popular peace action, on the grounds that *only* warfare could cripple and destroy the fascists. He was indifferent to a mass movement of the people, the only bulwark against fascism at home, and the simultaneous precondition of action by the Roosevelt government in collective security with other nations. Here was a convention of young people, very much alive, and intent on remaining alive, anxious, not to enroll in war, but rather to preserve peace; anxious to utilize every factor, no matter how temporary or qualified, anxious to find a program which affords the maximum probabilities of keeping the peace and defeating the fascists. To this audience, Schuman's address was a valedictory of confusion equal in effect to Thomas's oration of despair.

Thus from the same platform, proceeding from distinctly different positions, both Schuman and Thomas failed the convention. Schuman's complete misreading and misinterpretation of collective security only played into the hands of the Oxford pledge faction. A suggestion from the presiding committee that Gil Green, international secretary of the Young Communist League, be allowed to present the



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stand for collective security was voted down. Contrary to the subsequently widely publicized statements of the minority that the convention had been "steam-rollered," it was this fact which revealed beyond cavil or question that no single group held a mechanical majority.

Assembling for the decisive session, some delegates were perplexed and somewhat bewildered. Against both Thomas and Schuman, and their respective advices, the delegates decided to work the problem out with the resources of their own discussion, experiences, and the needs of their campuses.

THE DEBATE RESUMED in earnest. The resolutions committee brought in a majority report, termed a compromise proposal, abandoning the Oxford pledge, favoring economic sanctions, and modification of the Neutrality Act to distinguish between the aggressor and the victim. On the other hand, the resolution did not spare criticism of the Roosevelt government for the Shephard-Hill M-Day plans and increased war appropriations, and urged passage of the Ludlow bill. Such a resolution was obviously a compromise between those delegates who had a clear conviction of collective security and the great number who were opposed to isolation, but demanded a positive peace program.

Thereupon ensued a five-hour session in which the convention accomplished two main things: first it adopted the preamble of the majority report, definitely breaking with the isolationists, and second, it thoroughly exposed the methods and principles of the minority faction. Progress was delayed by a half dozen appeals from the chair. Decisions were postponed by redundant arguments on tens of points of order.

The forces of the minority were divided among the Thomas-Socialists, the Trotskyites, some liberal pacifists, and a few of less defined positions. Although a handful in number, the Trotskyites carried the main burden of the attack upon the program and misrepresentation of the organization as a whole. They utilized every difference of opinion, no matter how tenuous, to prevent the adoption of a peace program. They tried to span the breach between the most contradictory elements, so long as opposition to collective security prevailed. They alternated between ultra-revolutionary clamor, by labeling the union an adjunct of the Roosevelt government, to poor-little-buttercup speeches for defense of "democratic procedure" which was never denied to them. They introduced the Red scare, thereby catering to the press which was only too anxious to magnify every difference among the delegates. They alone dared to produce and defend as their own the very slogans—such as alleged Communist domination of the union—with which the campus reactionaries fight the organization.

The strategy of the Trotskyites is to undermine the Student Union from within, where possible, and openly attack it from the outside, where advisable. In any event, their motive is this: destruction of the Student Union. This follows from their fundamental

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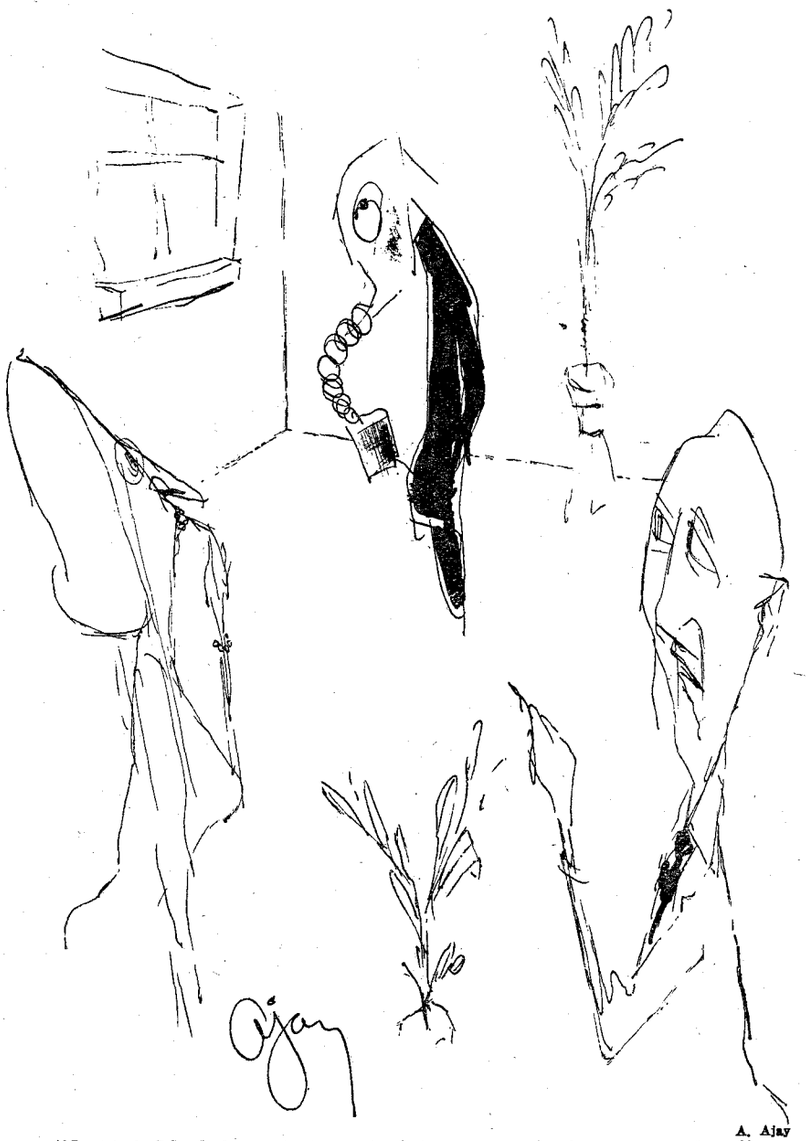
denunciation of the union as a "pro-war" organization. Occasionally, the young Socialists borrowed some of their theoretical ballast; it is where the two coincided that the Socialists were most damaging. Yet the Socialists found it advisable to make a statement before the convention that the Trotskyites have not represented the Young People's Socialist League since their recent expulsion.

No melodramatic device was ignored. At one point the Thomas-Socialists introduced a telegram from a meeting of the Student Christian Assembly in Ohio, purporting to prove that the official Christian students' organization was in favor of the Oxford pledge. Lash arose and pulled two telegrams from his pocket, received a day earlier but not disclosed, specifically denying the Socialist contention. At another point, a young man asked for the floor and his right to speak was challenged. It was revealed that he was not a delegate at all, whereupon he drew a ten-dollar bill from his wallet and offered to buy a delegate's card.

By the close of the meeting the Thomas-Socialists, who occupy important posts in the Union, and several of whose members were unanimously supported for the National Executive Committee, began to insinuate that they would split from the Union if the Oxford pledge were removed.

The unaffiliated students gaped, and wondered, and absorbed a minor educational lesson. Anger accumulated slowly. Several representatives of unaffiliated groups arose to castigate the disrupters and appealed for discussion of the issues, and votes on the proposals. All of which convinced the majority that no further compromise was possible, and 382 voted against the pledge while 108 sustained it. The union had definitely departed from isolation, and provided itself with a program of activities which will lead to further clarification of the meaning and promise of collective security.



A. Ajay

"I think Updyke is losing his faith in our isolationist policy."

ONLY TWICE IN the four-day meeting did the tension visibly relax. On Wednesday, December 29, the convention indulged in a first rate college dance, accompanied by an authentic swing band. That same evening saw the production of an operetta, entitled, "The Marxist Brothers Still at College," directed by Leo Rifkin, late of Brooklyn College, a new talent in the light opera field and a dead beat for Groucho Marx himself. For the next few days the delegates were humming:

> Alma Mater's going modern,
> Old Man Reaction's feeling blue,
> It's the academic, epidemic:
> Gonna join the A.S.U.

Then there was the spectacular bonfire in which hundreds of silk stockings, ties, and mufflers were burned on the frosty campus while the delegates went through the traditional snake dance.

Staff changes were announced in the closing hours. Robert Lane of Harvard becomes the new chairman; Molly Yard is retained as organizational secretary, Agnes Reynolds of Vassar, in charge of finances; Lloyd James of the University of Chicago, editor of the *Student Advocate,* and Joseph Lash, reëlected executive secretary. Celeste Strack and James Wechsler proceed to other work in different fields.

At the last moment, the Young People's Socialist League issued a statement calling the American Student Union a "pro-war organization," but denying their intention of splitting the Oxford pledge faction away, hinting that such a split might yet arise during the preparation of the anti-war strike, this coming April. James Wechsler made an impassioned valedictory on the possibility of a united-front organization of liberal and radical students.

THE AMERICAN STUDENT UNION has come a long way. It has indicated in this, its most representative convention, the full measure of its promise. For the classic test of leadership is the ability to accommodate its directions in response to changing conditions. Such a test is crucial for a united-front organization.

It would be unrealistic to believe that the issues have finally been settled by the convention. The struggle for the clarification of the A.S.U. program is likely to continue in more or less acute form on every campus. The intensity of this struggle will be reflected in every activity of the union for the coming year, particularly the April 27 anti-war strike.

Elements such as the Trotskyites can be expected to battle against the decisions of the highest body of the union at every juncture. Others of the defeated minority, especially the followers of Norman Thomas, are faced with the alternative of revising their defeatist policy or of forfeiting influence and leadership in the movement. In resolving its programmatic problems, the American Student Union is confronted with more than a sequence of concrete activities, more than picket lines, more than extending its organizational strength to conform with its influence. It will be possible during stirring events in the next few months to continue to extend the horizons of its positive program against war.

Through all of these things, it remains the historic opportunity of the American Student Union to participate in the confluence of progressive people's forces that will decide American destinies.

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Living People in a Historical Mural

The Story Behind Refregier's Revere Panels

NEW YORK CITY is still making guesses about Anton Refregier's murals in the Paul Revere room of the Hotel Lexington. These six panels, reproduced below, portray high points in the life of the hero whose famous midnight ride warned the American revolutionaries that the British were coming. What New Yorkers have been trying to find out is whether the artist has used contemporary people as models for his historical mural. Before reading further, you can make your own guesses. Do you recognize any living men in the faces of the mural?

Toward the end of the recent election campaign, a leading daily said that a figure in the first panel bore a striking resemblance to the Honorable Fiorello H. LaGuardia. Interviewed, the artist dodged a definite answer.

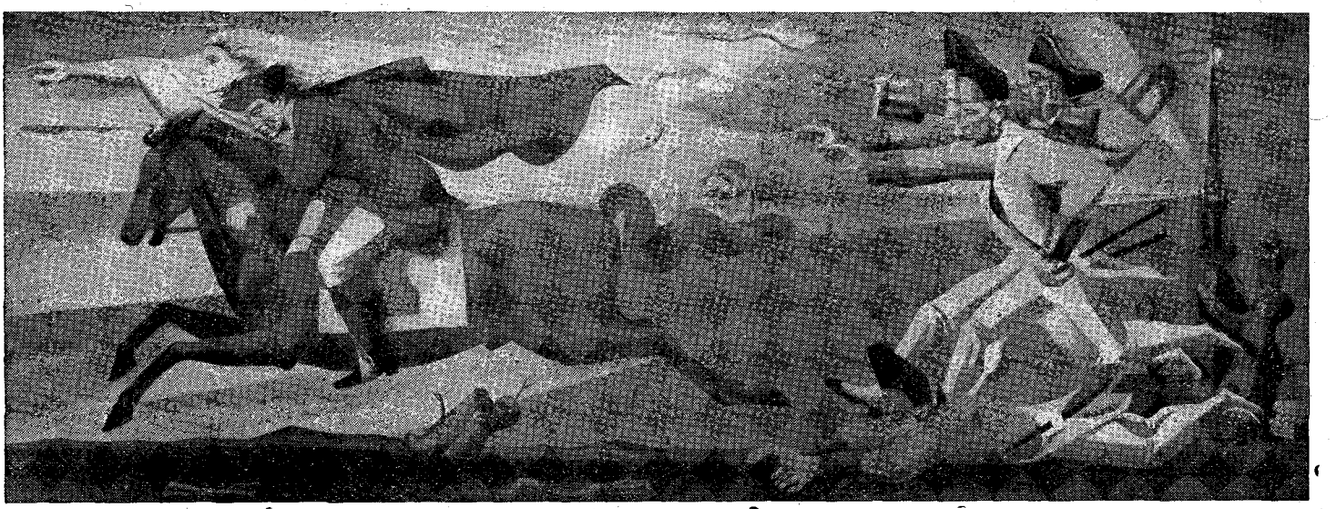
But the elections are over, and now it can be told. The head in the foreground of the first panel *is* that of His Honor, the Mayor.

That, however, is only part of the story. Here are the facts as furnished us by Anton Refregier himself. Mural painters of all times and lands have used contemporaries as models for historic figures. Most of the time they had to do so because they had no portraits of the historic personages to draw from. In the case of Paul Revere, the artist had another purpose in mind. He saw here subject matter with a parallel in our own time. He was not content to base his mural on research alone or to make it merely a record of the past. He saw that in our own time, as in Paul Revere's, there is a mighty conflict between reaction and progress, between wrong and right. He therefore took the facts of history and recreated them with an eye to contemporary America. In his own words, he wanted "Paul Revere once more to ride on his revolutionary mission."

Here Anton Refregier relied on various methods used by the modern artist. He studied the life and times of Paul Revere, the costumes and manners then prevalent, the course of the great American revolution. These were facts to be drawn upon with scrupulous exactness for the mural. But the result could be vital only through blending traditional with contemporary symbols. The lessons of history could be driven home most effectively through living images, and what is most solemn in our past could speak most eloquently through satire.

Hence the use of living men in the roles of figures on both sides of the revolutionary struggle of other days. In the first panel, for

I: *Planning the Tea Party*



IV: *The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere*

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instance, we see the Sons of Liberty planning the Boston Tea Party. The speaker standing and addressing the group around the table is Paul Revere. The seated Sons of Liberty have the heads of men living today. You will have no difficulty in recognizing the dominant figure of Mayor LaGuardia. Opposite him, at the other end of the table, is a man with the face of Lloyd Collins, poet and novelist; to his left is the face of Joseph Freeman, author of *An American Testament* and contributing editor to the NEW MASSES.

The second panel shows the American revolutionaries, disguised as Indians, dumping tea into Boston Harbor from the decks of the British *Dartmouth*. The three braves in the foreground are, from left to right, Paul Revere, James Cagney, and Franchot Tone. On the extreme right is a very unhappy tory who looks unmistakably like William Randolph Hearst.

The third panel shows a romantic episode in the famous midnight ride. Paul Revere and two companions, on their way to warn Hancock and Adams that British troops were about to arrest them, had to cross the Charles River in Boston. En route they suddenly remembebred that wrappings would be needed to silence the sound of the oars against the thole pins. They knocked at the door of the widow Tyler, who threw them her petticoat from an upper window.

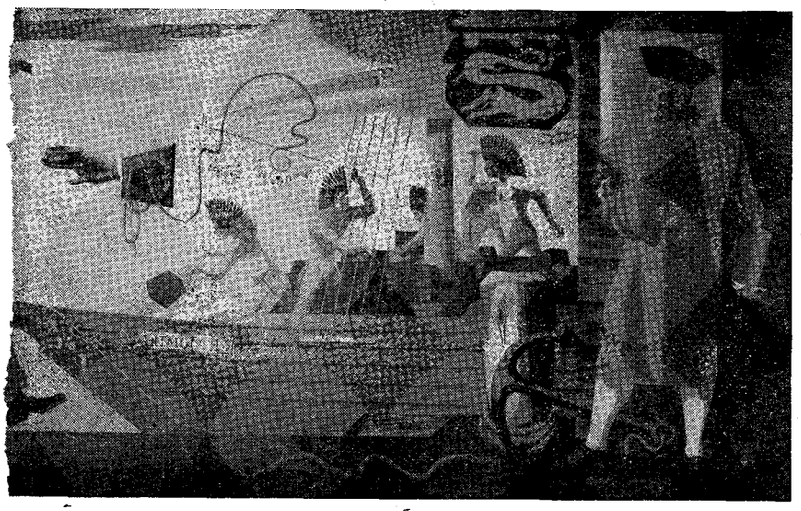
The fourth panel deals with the famous ride. Paul Revere, galloping on his way to the revolutionary leaders, is guided by the spirit of liberty. Behind him are British soldiers trying to stop him. These have the faces of contemporary tories: the three soldiers are Irenée, Pierre, and Lammot du Pont, the last sprawling on the ground; the British officer directing their pursuit is Herbert Hoover.

This panel was completed late in September. A week later, the newspapers reported that Irenée and Pierre du Pont were backing a reactionary outfit called the "Minute Men and Women of Today." This outfit was selling tear gas and guns to groups fighting the C.I.O. The leader of this gang had received a letter from Herbert Hoover's office assuring him of "all support," and similar letters from other prominent Republicans. The artist's perception was unusually clear when he painted his fourth panel.

The fifth panel deals with an aspect of Paul Revere's life which is not generally known. He was a superb craftsman in silver, an inventor, a dentist, an engraver, a printer, a gunpowder manufacturer, an able organizer, and a skilled mechanic. The Continental Congress commissioned him to design and print the earliest form of Continental currency. Anton Refregier has a soft spot for him because he was America's first popular artist; several of his engravings were widely circulated, especially the one dealing with the Boston massacre.

The final panel shows Paul Revere surrounded by his family. He was married twice.

Anton Refregier, who painted this striking mural for the Hotel Lexington, is a veteran NEW MASSES contributor. His paintings have been exhibited in the Whitney Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh, the Rochester Museum, and in many other parts of the country. He designed the sets for Erika Mann's anti-fascist revue *Peppermill* and has painted murals for various public buildings and private homes. He is a member of the Artists' Congress as well as of the Artists' Union and of the Mural Painters' Guild.



The Boston Tea Party

III: *The Widow Tyler's Petticoat*

V: *Revere, the Money Printer*

VI: *Revere and His Many Children*

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Rehearsal in the Sun

By Julia C. French

THE problem read: "There has been a slate fall. Patient discovered lying face down. Examination reveals the following injuries: laceration of right eyelid and piece of slate embedded in eyeball; compound fracture of left elbow; first and third fingers of right hand broken; left leg is broken below knee; left foot sprained or broken; great toe of right foot lacerated and bleeding freely. Patient conscious, eyes dilated, complains of pain in region of midriff. Your time is eight minutes."

The heads came up from the slip of paper, not seeing the crowd or the rows of canvas mats, each memorizing the job ahead.

"Remember," the captain said, "the left leg, the right toe."

The men leaped forward, choosing splints, bandages, kits, blankets, a collapsed stretcher from the long white chest. They stood at the edge of the canvas mat, straining for the bell. The end man glanced down the long row of mats and scurrying white uniforms. He stretched out his foot and prodded the boy on the mat. "On your face. All the others are."

The boy uncovered his eyes and looked to the captain. The western sun struck full in his face.

"Turn over, damn you," the captain whispered tensely.

The bell rang, and on the instant the men dropped beside the boy, scattering splints and bandages around them on the canvas mat. The captain made a pillow of the blanket. "Elevate head," he said loud enough for the judge to hear. He stretched the roll of gauze across the right eye, over and under the head, knotted it.

Two men bound the left arm into a clumsy wooden L. The left leg stretched stiffly along a splint, the foot pressed against a thick block of wood. The sun struck off the shiny black mine-caps in shifting points. There was something unnatural about the sunlight. Sweat began to drop onto the white bandages; they wiped their foreheads on their shirt-sleeves.

"Ice-pack on patient's left side," the captain said loudly.

The right hand was finished and laid aside like a clumsy bundle. The man padded the long board with a blanket, slipped bands of cloth under the boy, ready to bind him tightly to the board. They had scarcely moved him. The sunshine was like the glaring light in a dream. There was no breeze blowing, either up river or down.

THE BELL cut sharply into their nerves. "Beginning of the first minute overtime—" the voice was distorted by the loudspeaker.

Faces betrayed tenseness only. A man stroked the boy's leg upward toward the knee, gently, over and over. They unfolded and tested the stretcher. "Prepare to turn patient. Turn patient." The staccato orders followed close on each other. "Lower patient on stretcher."

The bell jangled in the tense air. "Beginning of the second minute overtime."

The men swept aside the kits and unused bandages. They jerked up stiffly as if to salute. "One! Two! Three!"—they numbered. The judge checked the time on the score sheet. They looked down the long line of kneeling and scrambling miners, and for a moment their faces relaxed. "We finished first." The judge squatted by the boy and began to check the bindings. His knotty hands, with coal dust in the cracks, looked strange against the white bandages. He slipped the gauze from the head. "A little loose, boys." He leaned aside to spit. "But that's about all."

The sun struck into the boy's face. He covered his eyes with his hand, and looked between his fingers at the staring crowd. His stiff, bundled body had become a symbol of their unconscious fears. His mother lifted a hand and pushed back a gray string of hair, but left the tear to take its unobstructed course.

"For cripe's sake," he said, "get me out of this harness."

The captain walked over to the ropes. The girl's hair lay in tight, permanent-waved curls, but when she smiled her teeth were imperfect. "Honey," she said.

"Only two minutes overtime," he said. "Here, hurry and get the team a coke." His hand trembled as he handed out the money.

The crowd outside the ropes had come to life. "If you ask me, it's a damn good thing," someone was saying. "Most of the time they don't even have to go to the hospital."

"It costs us plenty besides the practice," the answer came. "We pay for first aid and the hospital. Looks like we hadn't ought to have to pay for both."

The men drank long draughts from the bottles. They pushed back their caps that sparkled like coal in the sun, and laughed. For the first time you saw that the oldest one couldn't be more than twenty-one. The boy looked slighter than ever without splints and bandages. He sat with his face turned away from the crowd and his mother.

The bell rang and the distorted voice announced, "All safety teams ready for the second problem!" The men threw the bottles aside and stood at attention. The boy lay down on the mat, shading his eyes against the unaccustomed sunlight. Everyone felt the irrelevancy of the sunlight.

Ben Yomen

"I may be imagining it, but at every ball for the last fifteen years the archduke has seemed more and more vague about that invitation to his party at the St. Petersburg Winter Palace."

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Senator Wheeler and Professor Keeney

By William F. Dunne

THE arbitrary discharge of Professor Keeney, for six years librarian of the University of Montana, has aroused nation-wide interest and protest in labor, literary, and educational circles. He has the support of the Montana labor movement, both C.I.O. and A. F. of L., and of the powerful Farmers' Union. Professor Keeney was notified that his contract would not be renewed just one week after he had organized the local of the American Federation of Teachers on the campus last April.

Alarmed by the mass support for Professor Keeney, the Anaconda Copper Mining Co. agents, running true to type and by characteristic methods, acting through a third party, have offered Professor Keeney $2000 and a year's vacation—if he will stop his "agitation"—and resign. He has refused the offer to surrender.

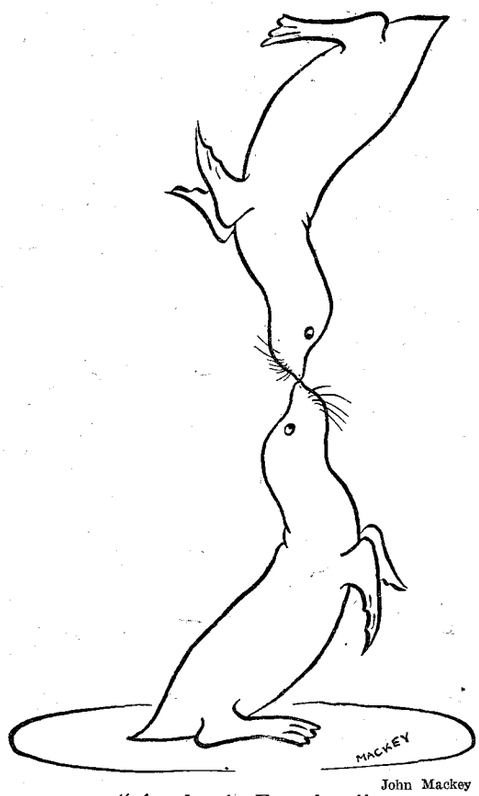
The control of the university, as well as other state institutions, by the Anaconda Mining Co. bi-partisan political machine, is a matter of public knowledge. Additional interest attaches to the Keeney case since Montana is the home state of Senator Burton Kendall Wheeler, who tries to retain his liberal camouflage in spite of his leadership of the tory forces against Supreme Court reform and his important part in scuttling the wages and hours bill and other progressive legislation in the last session of Congress.

To date, Senator Wheeler has done nothing to defend Professor Keeney or to support labor's protests in his behalf. To do so he must repudiate Governor Ayers, the acknowledged tool of the Anaconda Mining Co., for whom Senator Wheeler vouched in the Democratic primary and the elections of 1936.

THE persecution of Professor Keeney is only one point in the program of the new reactionary political coalition in Montana. Wheeler, Governor Ayers, and a horde of their appointees are carrying out the Anaconda policy of suppressing any semblance of progressive thought or action in the state educational institutions, as part of the general offensive to corrupt and cripple the organized labor and farmer movement in Montana and throughout the Northwest.

The case of Professor Keeney is really the case of Senator Wheeler. Professor Keeney's discharge could never have occurred without the active or tacit connivance of Wheeler. His failure to aid Keeney in *any* way shows that his opposition to Supreme Court reform is not the result of a temporary aberration, but that his national political line coincides with his state political line—which is the political line of the Anaconda Copper Mining Co., of Standard Oil, of monopoly capital.

Dr. Simmons, President of the University of Montana, appointed to and holding that position by grace of Governor Ayers, Senator Wheeler, the Missoula Mercantile Co., and the Anaconda Copper Mining Co., has furnished the best news story of the past year in the field of persecution of professors for labor activity and progressive educational views.



John Mackey

"Academic Freedom"

Just after the hearing on the mandamus proceedings in behalf of Professor Keeney, brought by the State Federation of Labor and the Keeney Defense Committee before Judge Padbury in Helena, the state capitol, with Wellington D. Rankin as attorney, your correspondent asked Dr. Simmons what, in his opinion, were the reasons for not renewing Professor Keeney's contract as librarian after six years of service.

Dr. Simmons, who looks much more like a high pressure salesman for Goldman-Sachs stock—or rather like what they used to look before the 1929 crash—than a university president, may have been handicapped because his attorney, Edwin Booth, veteran copper-company politician, was riding hard on him. But what he actually said was that his position on the matter was that contained in the brief filed by Eddie Booth, which denied Professor Keeney's charges that he had been dismissed for organizing a local union of the American Federation of Teachers on the campus.

That brief, filed in behalf not only of Dr. Simmons, but in behalf of Governor Ayers and the State Board of Education, makes not one single charge against Professor Keeney. The Booth brief does not question Professor Keeney's high academic attainments; it does not question his competency, his organizational ability, his grasp of the functions of a librarian, or his character.

The only contention made is that Dr. Simmons had the power to fire Professor Keeney without publicly giving any reasons, and that Governor Ayers and the State Board of Education had the right to uphold him in this arbitrary action.

BUT here, Dr. Simmons, the governor, and his appointees on the State Board of Education run into a number of snags. Attorney-General Freebourn and Ruth Reardon of the Butte teachers' union are the only two members of the State Board *not* appointed by Governor Ayers. They are firmly of the opinion, and have been from the beginning, that Professor Keeney was fired like a coolie laborer, mainly because he took the lead in organizing a teachers' union and secured twenty-seven signatures of faculty members for a union charter on March 31.

He received his notice of dismissal on April 7—one week later.

Attorney-General Freebourn feels so strongly that Professor Keeney was unjustly discharged, he is so certain that the Keeney case is clearly one of persecution for labor-union activity and liberal literary and educational views that, while he is technically, because of his official position, in the same boat with Governor Ayers and Dr. Simmons, his *own* brief in the Helena mandamus proceedings *upholds the contentions made in the Rankin brief for Keeney.*

Attorney-General Freebourn was called as a witness for Professor Keeney. He testified that at the closed meeting of the State Board of Education late last spring—the minutes of which have been expunged from the record (and with them the childish complaints of Dr. Simmons)—he had recommended that Professor Keeney's contract be renewed. He testified further that the only complaints made about Professor Keeney by Dr. Simmons at that meeting were that Dr. Simmons was made "unhappy" by meeting Keeney on the campus and that Professor Keeney "reads the New York *Times* mornings."

Apparently puzzled by the puerility of Dr. Simmons's complaints and unable to believe his own ears, Attorney Rankin had the attorney-general repeat this part of his testimony.

Called to the stand, the president of the State Federation of Labor testified that he had been aware of the anti-labor attitude of Dr. Simmons for a year previous to the dis-

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charge of Professor Keeney. He stated under oath, although Attorney Eddie Booth objected to it as hearsay, that the organization committee of the State Federation in Missoula, where the university is located, had reported to him that Dr. Simmons was opposed to the formation of a teachers' union. He also testified that at the meeting of the State Board of Education he had been denied the right to speak in behalf of Keeney.

Professor Keeney testified in a quiet, scholarly manner in regard to his activity in getting charter signatures for the local union, his qualifications and experiences as a librarian —four years as assistant librarian at the University of Michigan and six years at the University of Montana.

FOLLOWING the first hearing on the writ of mandamus calling on Governor Ayers and the State Board of Education to reinstate Professor Keeney or show cause why he should be discharged, the status of the official foes of Professor Keeney and the position of his supporters in labor circles is as follows.

Dr. Simmons, by his own admissions and by his counsel's brief, has placed himself in the position of discharging a professor on permanent tenure, according to Clause 2 of the regulations of the State Board, without having any reason for doing so that can be made public. This is both an unprecedented and an untenable position for the titular head of a great educational institution supported by state funds.

Clause 2 reads: *"Professors and associate professors are on permanent appointment; provided, however, that the initial appointment to a full professorship or to an associate professorship may be for a limited term. Such limited term appointment may be renewed; provided, however, that reappointment after three years of service shall be deemed a permanent appointment."*

Professor Keeney, as before stated, has *six* years of service. He was, therefore, a permanent appointee to a full professorship. He could be discharged only for cause and after a hearing. No charges have been preferred, and Professor Keeney was deprived of his rights under the statute.

Dr. Simmons personally did not dare, nor did members of the State Board appointed by Governor Ayers dare, to make under oath at the mandamus hearing any statements in substantiation of the low gossip, innuendo, and insinuations against Professor Keeney they were so liberal with in conversations with members of an investigation committee from the Cascade Trades and Labor Council last May.

These unfounded and malicious statements tended to color the committee's report so that on both the labor and legal issues involved some mistaken impressions were created. The mandamus proceedings have cleared up these points and exposed the duplicity of those responsible for the persecution of Professor Keeney and Professor Roew and the earmarking for similar treatment of some twelve or thirteen more of the university faculty.

The morale of Dr. Simmons, Governor Ayers, and the State Board of Education is very low. They expected to get rid of Keeney, intimidate the rest of the faculty and wipe the teachers' union out of existence without any trouble. The Montana labor movement and the American Federation of Teachers have made this impossible. Practically every Central Labor Council in the state is on record for Keeney's reinstatement. So are most of the large local unions.

The Silver Bow Trades & Labor Assembly, composed of C.I.O. and A. F. of L. unions, following remarks by Professor Keeney and your correspondent, voted to put the Keeney case squarely up to Senator Wheeler. The Cascade Trades & Labor Assembly, to which both A. F. of L. and C.I.O. unions are affiliated, arranged a huge protest mass meeting with Congressman Jerry O'Connell and Attorney-General Freebourn as chief speakers. The Butte Miners' Union, C.I.O., voted an appropriation to help defray the expense of the Keeney defense campaign. These are examples of united action by C.I.O. and A. F. of L. bodies on the Keeney case.

Petitions for Professor Keeney's reinstatement, furnished by the American Federation of Teachers, the cost being paid by that organization, are distributed widely through the unions and other progressive mediums. The coming pamphlet will bear the signatures of many well-known labor men and progressives in other walks of life.

From all recent developments it appears that the Montana labor movement is determined not only to compel the righting of the injustice done Professor Keeney but to make of his case an issue that will arouse all sections of the movement, A. F. of L. and C.I.O. unions, to united effort to free the chief educational institutions of the state from the strangling grip of the A.C.M. and its political protegés.

Woodcut by Dan Rico

Silicosis

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READERS' FORUM

Is Hatred Always an Evil?

TO THE NEW MASSES:

THERE is a large question looming up in my mind that involves both of us and I hope to have the answer from your wider experience.

It is the result of the letter found in the enclosed copy of the *American Artist,* publication of the American Artists' Congress.

Question: Am I just another second-class Bellows in that I did a big, gruesome, vicious-looking Japanese marauder, a slight substitution for Bellows's "Hun"? I refer to the full page drawing of mine you published in the NEW MASSES of November 23.

Wherein, if at all, is the great difference between the hate I felt and the hate I must have communicated from the drawing, and that of Bellows in his many "Hun" drawings?

I realize, of course, that we feel that the war in which Germans were called Huns was really Morgan's war, and this one is a fascist-imperialist war of aggression against the democracies of the world. However, the hate was the same in 1917, and the belief in the hearts of all good Americans was—protect democracy.

Please believe that this is sincere and not heckling and caviling a question.

I desire to know what approach to take for my future work and at present I find only confusion.

New York City. STUYVESANT VAN VEEN.

The letter to *American Artist* to which Mr. Van Veen refers follows:

I have just come across a lithograph George Bellows made during the war, for use in connection with Liberty Loan campaigns, in which he depicted one of the atrocity stories then current about the enemy armies.

If seems like a striking example of the way war propaganda is conducted.

It is indeed regrettable, if not appalling, that an artist of Bellows's caliber could be sucked in, but such a fact might well be pointed out to prove even more conclusively what a potent factor war propaganda can be when such minds go down before it.

It might well serve as a warning to all artists to come. GILBERT WILSON.

The Editors Reply

THE confusion, we believe, lies in the abstract way Mr. Van Veen states the problem. George Bellows's picture *was* vicious; it was vicious *because* it served a vicious end. But hatred by itself is not necessarily vicious. Whether one's hate is a good or an evil can be determined only with reference to the object of that hate. Otherwise, we would have to say that the hatred of exploitation, greed, parasitic wealth, and so on, is just as evil as the hatred of peace, economic plenty, and genuine democracy. When hatred is made abstract, it becomes a total evil; this in turn makes it impossible for us to hate evils. Obviously, this is an intolerable choice unless one adopts the "turn the other cheek" philosophy. We believe that those who want to make a better world have to confront and struggle against those on the side of war and oppression.

It is true, as Mr. Van Veen says, that many of those who fought Morgan's war in 1917 did so under the impression that they were fighting for democracy. This only shows that the people are ready to fight for democracy, but it does not change the real character of the war of 1914-18. Has that war anything in common with Japan's aggression against China? If both are identical, then we must conclude that China and Japan are equally guilty and say "a plague on both your houses." But if we believe—as practically nobody doubts—that the Japanese military are fighting a war of conquest and pillage against an innocent people, forced to defend their homes and their freedom against great odds, then we must go beyond 1914-18. We have to rouse the hatred and the conscience of mankind against this aggression. We must do all in our power to save the victim of this aggression; Japan victorious only means further and more disastrous aggressions.

Wherein, then, is the difference between Van Veen's hate and Bellows's hate? The difference lies in their totally different social significance; and this in turn depends on the different characters of the two wars. Psychologically, hates may be identical. Socially, they may be poles apart. In Van Veen's case, the social consequence is to help an innocent, ill-defended victim against a thoroughly vicious, well-armed aggressor. In Bellows's case, the hate was directed against one robber coalition on behalf of another robber coalition.

We fully appreciate the gravity of Mr. Van Veen's problem and in no sense do we look upon it as heckling or caviling. Much the same problem confronts the religious pacifist. The answer for both lies in seeing the problem in terms of its social setting and consequences rather than in its abstract, psychological form. THE EDITORS.

Wants Communist Poetry

TO THE NEW MASSES:

I HAVE ceased to read NEW MASSES poetry or to look in your direction for the kind of poetry I require. On your invitation to speak, I made this attempt to tell you why.

So that I could speak my piece, I examined NEW MASSES poetry for 1937. I assume that your selections are representative of the best communist poetry to be had, which makes me doubly unhappy, because a certain stout four-letter word is the most accurate description I could make of this poetry.

It may be fruited wtih revolutionary significance for you comrades way up there in New York City, but don't pretend that you are publishing poetry for *my* sake. (And who am I? A constant reader, with a voice and, by God, a vote!)

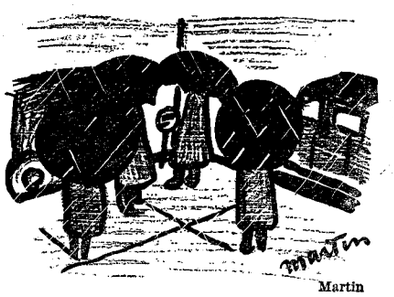
I never stood "immaculate in the Ego," and I know damned well I never saw "bunched anguish"—therefore, I can't read Richard Eberhart.

I never saw "delighted blinds"—but if Frederic Prokosch's ivory tower is equipped with such things he's welcome to them.

I've worked in many a cornfield and I wonder if Muriel Rukeyser ever came near one. Her poem in the recent Literary Supplement indicates not. Her poem, "The Disease," is better—it talks about one thing, happily, but it lacks the impact that some news articles on silicosis have had. Miss Rukeyser may be prejudiced against verbs, but we poor unemancipated fools down here require verbs regularly.

About Valentine Ackland—I've never seen "wedded flesh transformed to welded steel," and the poem "1937" is as incredible to me as the much touted Picasso.

And so on from Helen Neville to James Agee and beyond. These poets give me not my own life but regurgitations of their own lives, slim fare for those who on the earth do dwell. Their poetry does not sing to me, Awake! or shout, Arise!, or thumb its nose at my masters, or help me aim my kicks at my masters' britches. Indeed, I spend so much time looking for the verbal sense of passages or supplying my own capital letters in a vain effort to impose order on what is actually messy, that I am inspired only to kick the poets.



Martin

This poetry business is making anti-intellectuals out of some of us. Let Horace Gregory sell the *Daily Worker* on the subway for a year if he doesn't know what I mean. I sometimes wish Uncle Mike Gold would rise and slay these demons for us, for his is a sensible voice crying in what appears to be a wilderness of ivory towers.

It is too much to ask that *some* communist poetry be written for workers and worker-audiences, that some of it speak with flesh-and-blood straightforwardness (and to hell with cleverness for its own sake—these unimpressive attempts to build new forms—which will grow, comrades, from that body of poetry which I and those like me may choose to maintain), that some communist poetry speak to me and other rank-and-file workers of a Soviet America—and of our own bloody struggle for democracy!

Or must we continue to float along in Sandburg's leaky ideology, or go back, back, back to Vachel Lindsay, or to a fading Walt Whitman?

For these three are closer to the American people than any of your inestimable NEW MASSES poetasters.

Thanks for opening the subject. Maybe your discussion will bring our communist poetry down to earth.

Commonwealth College LEE HAYS.
Mena, Arkansas.

Good and Effective Poetry

TO THE NEW MASSES:

IN respect to your question "Is poetry dead?" I would say both men are correct. Mr. Gulette shouts, "The king is dead!" Mr. Shepard shouts, "Long live the king!" Mr. Gulette is mistaken when he says the poetry that has died has no mourners as he has put on sackcloth and ashes himself.

"Do we like poetry?" I think that any publication that doesn't contain some is incomplete. I recognize, of course, that it cannot be measured and parceled like sugar. I like poetry for its own sake and for its usefulness.

What kind do we like? Confining myself to that which is coming fresh from the press today I like the simple, direct little verses such as Macdiarmid's "If I Was Not a Soldier"; Joe Wallace's "Don't Weep for Doris." I do not like the amorphous type such as M. Rukeyser submitted in your literary supplement. Perhaps I am too much impressed by its effectiveness but listen to this. Origin and author unknown to me.

The golf links were so near the mill
That almost every day
The little children at their work
Could see the men at play.

Again:

People turned and smiled.
They saw him reel and thought him drunk.
I crept close up to steal
A look into his face.
The lines were carved
Like granite statues hewed.
The man was starved.

(J.S.B. in the *Canadian Clarion.*)

Are any or all of these good poetry? I do not pretend to judge. I do know that each contains a stinging straight left to the face. Some day a worker will appear who will gather it all together into one mighty knockout blow. In the meantime we lesser ones must do what we can.

London, Ontario. R. W. LALLEY.

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BOOK REVIEWS

A Letter to W. H. Auden

LETTERS FROM ICELAND, *by W. H. Auden and Louis MacNeice. Random House.* $3.

AUDEN, more adult than the rest of us,
Who've traveled farther and to better purpose,
Exploring areas of guilt and joy
What it is necessary to destroy
There, and what may be kept, and the conditions
That enforce and multiply partitions—
Alert to man and mankind's need to love
And the neuroses we're compounded of,
Your accurate exuberant pen has shown
To each the common crisis and his own
Predicament, how he may alter it:
Not singly but together may outwit
His enemies. The critic who remarks
Disparagingly your linking Freud and Marx
Is either astigmatic or obtuse,
For it's not Freud's discoveries but the use
They're put to, that makes all the difference.
The fascist, not ourselves, would build a fence
Around man's knowledge, with a sign *Keep Out!*
Dangerous Doctrines and Mad Dogs About!
Poets and communists do not require
Storm-troopers, dungeons, or a Reichstag fire;
Unhampered by an obvious contradiction
Their building-plans are open to inspection,
As yours are, Auden. Those who look will find
No manacles or trap doors for the mind,
Nor the cute æsthete's unavailing cry.
"For the world is, and the present, and the lie"
And little cults and coteries are no good
In this or any other neighborhood.

Now, if I may, I want to speak instead
Of other matters, to tell you I've just read
Letters from Iceland and enjoyed it more
Than most the books *le beau monde* clamors for.
(You know, of course, that you've been taken on
As a "significant" phenomenon,
Which in your case is neither here nor there,
Good art being made to stand the wear and tear.)
This then's no ordinary travel yarn,
And I believe it only fair to warn
Readers seeking a refuge from machinery
These *Letters* are concerned with men, not scenery.
Snapshots there are, and fine ones, and enough
About the towns and landscape, but no lush stuff,
No purple posturings, no panegyrics,
No bogus tourist wet-your-pants hysterics. . . .
In fields, by waterfall or geyser, Europe.
And Europe where those crags mock human hope,
On lonely farms and in the Arctic stare—
In all our lives that shadow lodging there.
You too have known it, but have also known
That in that shadow none can stand alone
And each must find in his unhappiness
"The wish and power to act, forgive, and bless."
Better than anything that I might say,
Your own words, simple and eloquent. They
Do you honor as a man as well as
Poet, Auden—the best Young England has.

T. C. WILSON.

Empty Bellies and Loony Schemes

OLD HELL, *by Emmett Gowen. Modern Age Books. Cloth, 85c. Paper, 25c.*

OLD HELL FRICKLES, he laid down his weary bones to take a nap, and the Good Lord sent him a dream about oil under his land. All the country thereabout was "so pore the rabbits couldn't cross it without toting a lunch." Old Hell had been mighty hard up for a long spell. His mule was so danged skinny the lice were dropping off him from undernourishment; and his wife, Toby, had shriveled away until "her bones stuck out like sticks in a sack." Hunger made both Old Hell and her kind of daffy, and she got the idea that a good soup might be made by boiling the strength out of the stones all about. Rocks were plentiful enough, goodness knows.

After that dream the Good Lord sent him, Old Hell was a changed man. He knew he was as good as rich, for there was that whopping pool of black gold right under his shack, just waiting to be drilled into. He started dickering with Luster Outhouse, who owned a well-digging outfit, as well as a feisty fifteen-year-old wife, Floretta, whose mother had garnered the fanciful name from a can of talcum powder.

John Heliker

Floretta had mighty purty legs, and she didn't begrudge showing them. Luster often hollered: "Put your dress down, sugar!" both as an admonition to modesty and as a signal to shut her too-freely blabbing mouth when some issue of importance, like a swap, was trembling in the balance. Old Hell got a terrible honing after Floretta, and he set his mind on getting Toby to hold her sometime while he had his way with her. He could tell by the way she jumped when he pinched her rump that she was too touchous to ride unbridled.

After a sight of maneuvering, Old Hell had Luster converted back to oil and persuaded him to start digging. Luster had become an "atheist" on the subject of oil, since he had been disappointed sorely several times in the past. That's when the fun—and the hell, too—really began. Included in the events is one of the most bizarre court trials this reviewer has ever read about, much less seen. But it all seems very real, and this quality of credibility pervades everything that happens.

Southern highlanders have been subjected to a lot of scrutiny and dissection. Social workers of the Russell Sage Foundation type, armed with notebooks, phonograph-recording devices, cameras, and so on, have been camping among the mountaineers for years. They set down quaint phrases, zestfully trace their etymology back to Merrie England, and avidly collect data about "play parties," square dances, and patchwork quilts. Emmett Gowen has left these competitors panting and sweating a mile and a half behind when it comes to knowing just what a mountaineer thinks, what he says, and what he does. Not a few of those who were actually reared on the scene merely fill their literary poke with an assorted set of hill-billy sayings and drag them in by the ears wherever possible.

To maintain the entire text of a book in the rich dialogue of *Old Hell* is a task requiring no small degree of skill, but Gowen turns out a remarkably consistent job. Only a time or two does he put into the mouth of the narrator such incongruous words as these: ". . . The knife poised to throw, with the rhythm of its steady throwing broken." Gowen's shrewd understanding is strikingly revealed in Old Hell's pious rationalizations of his behavior—petty thieveries, skullduggery, murder, and attempted incest will all be condoned by the Good Lord, who, indeed, often sanctions these activities in advance by a dream or other sign. It is this broad under-

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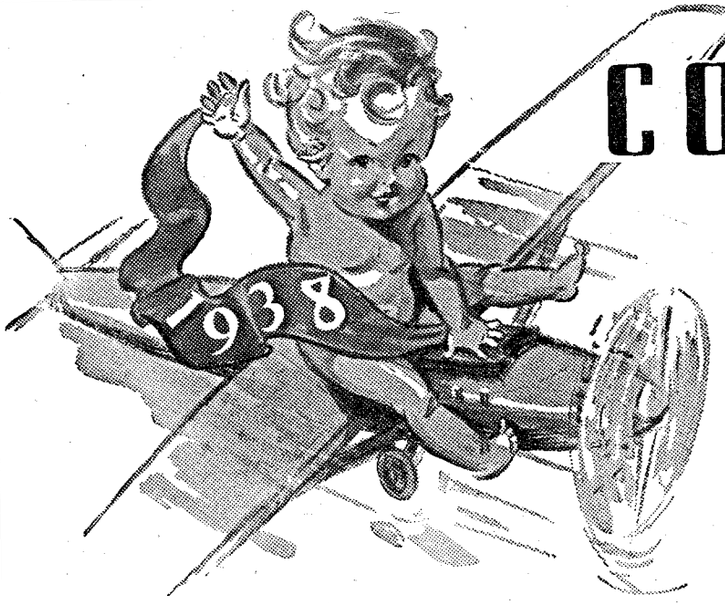

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lying—no, underlying is not the right word, integrated is better—social comprehension that lends the novel one element of its dual importance. The pungent idiom of the mountains is recreated with almost faultless perfection, but there is more here than courting, fiddling, skylarking, or play parties. Empty bellies engender enfeebled minds and spur on loony schemes, and Old Hell is a living demonstration of this fact. Ten-cent-store girls buy sweepstakes tickets and enjoy a brief, feverish dream of wealth, hosts of Negroes are mulcted by the "policy" racket, thousands of housewives buy Crisco they don't need trying to win one of five hundred or so handsome cash prizes by merely adding twenty-five words or less to the following sentence.... ..... and be sure to enclose a Crisco wrapper. Like Old Hell, they seek that bright, impalpable Eldorado.

JACK CONROY.

A Heroine of Modern Science

MADAME CURIE, *by Eve Curie. Translated by Vincent Sheean. Doubleday, Doran & Co.* $3.50.

INTEGRITY, courage, endurance. These are the qualities of mind and character which, like the emanations of her beloved radium, suffused the life of Madame Marie Curie-Sklodovski, daughter of Polish patriots and one of the great scientists of all time.

In her biography, so ably translated by the author of *Personal History,* Eve Curie, wisely abiding by her own limitations, has preferred the deeply moving, human record to the more public, but of necessity less popular scientific one. Too worshipful, perhaps, and at times—especially on the subject of her famous mother's experience with the incredible American ballyhoo—naïve to the point of genality, Miss Curie has nevertheless given us a story which for charm, vividness of intimate detail, and sheer poignancy in suffering and achievement should be an inspiration to thousands. Especially, let us hope, to those "classes unfavored by fortune," whose unjust exclusion from the labors and honors of science seemed to Madame Curie one of the cruelest and most criminal wastes of our society.

Hardship and terror, as symbolized by czarist Russia, dominated the childhood and youth of the passionate girl whose family was well regarded by the Polish intellectuals of Warsaw. Brilliant, versatile, full of the energy which stops at nothing, the young Marie combined intense study with constant resistance to the czarist bureaucrats: these early years laid the foundation of her life-long hatred of tyranny, a hatred which was to make her a legend of heroism in war-torn France. It is possible to see the ravages of this bitter time in the little story which Miss Curie tells of her mother's attitude toward scientists who took a partisan stand during, and after, the World War. Rightly angered by those German savants who signed the "Manifesto of the Ninety-Three" justifying imperial Germany's war aims, Madame Curie was later to denounce, as a form of intellectual "betrayal," the public approval of the struggling Soviet government by a group of Russian scientists. This distrust of revolution has an ironic undertone in the fact that during the time (1912-13) Madame Curie was negotiating with her adored Poland for a Radium Institute at Warsaw, there was living in nearby Cracow the man who more than any other single person was preparing for the overthrow of the hated czar, V. I. Lenin.

But Madame Curie's real life was in her laboratory, and this is the life of whose extraordinary depth and richness her daughter tells us. Paris, with its terrible struggles, its years of unalloyed work, its defeats, slow recognition, and final burst of triumph and glory in company with her great husband—this is the heart of the book. We are grateful to Miss Curie for the many unique private letters which show her mother's boundless tenacity of purpose, the vast compassion and vigilance that enabled Marie not only to illuminate the human affairs of those about her, but also to dominate, with exceptional ability and precision, the myriad details of research and technique whose sole end was the isolation of the fabulous new element, radium. It is heartbreaking to read of the cruel death which so swiftly overtook Pierre, and to hear the bereaved wife repeating, with cold set face, his favorite words: "Whatever happens, even if one has to go on like a body without a soul, one must work just the same. . . ."

Madame Curie obeyed, and the record of her subsequent achievements has the character of an epic: an epic of flaming devotion to scientific truth and to the ideals of a genuinely great society. Before her death, serenely indifferent to commercial chicane, to a deliberately renounced wealth, and to the symbols of fame, she had been awarded over a hundred honorary academic and scientific titles. "I am among those," she had said in Madrid in 1933, "who think that science has great beauty. . . . If I see anything around me, it is precisely that spirit of adventure, which seems indestructible. . . ." As indestructible as the radium for which she lived, and which was to bring greater life to others.

HAROLD WARD.

Peter Verdi

From Gothic to Gropper

SIX CENTURIES OF FINE PRINTS, *by Carl Zigrosser. Covici-Friede,* $5.

PRINT-MAKING, like a lot of other things, began with the Renaissance. So, with a minimum of introduction which consists largely of necessary technical explanations, Carl Zigrosser begins his story with a chapter headed "The End of Gothic" and carries it along in a scholarly but very readable manner through "The Renaissance" (Dürer, Breughel), "The Seventeenth Century" (Watteau, Hogarth), "The Nineteenth Century" (Goya, Daumier, Delacroix), right up to Max Weber, Rockwell Kent, Lynd Ward, Gropper, and others of our own "Twentieth Century." The last chapter is an excellent anti-climax entitled "A Note on Oriental Art," wherein we find, of course, that the Chinese were making prints six centuries before the European artists of the first chapter. The print-making of China, along with that of Japan, is briefly summarized in this essay from its beginning to the present war.

All this takes only 195 clean, well-margined pages; the 488 illustrations are not scattered through the text but are grouped together and comprise the last half of the book (a good idea, too). The result is a handsome and comprehensive handbook and a necessary volume in any art library—even a very meager one.

When Mr. Zigrosser or any dealer or collector or anyone else speaks of "fine prints," he means, of course, woodcuts, engravings, etchings, and lithographs. The newest of these processes—lithography—was invented over a hundred years ago, when the graphic arts were still in something less than their swaddling clothes. The tremendous technical development of printing, especially that of the last thirty years, has had little effect on the printed fine art of today. It is still confined to the woodcut, the etching (which some time ago completely supplanted the difficult and limiting engraving), and the stone lithograph. There is something sad and something not a little screwy in the idea of the socially conscious modern artist delivering his important message (and it is plenty important) to a tiny art-gallery world by handicraft methods hundreds of years old. There are obvious reasons why this state of affairs exists, but there are

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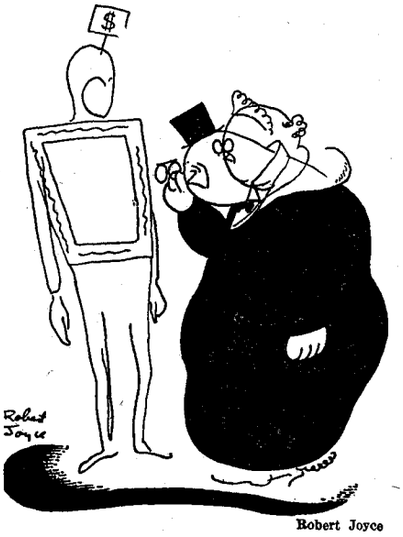
also an increasing number of reasons why it should not—also obvious.

Why haven't modern printing processes been used by the fine artist of today for original productions as well as for reproductions? Photo-lithography and photo-gelatin printing (both developments of the simple lithograph), when the artist gauges his work to the capacity and limitation of the mediums, offer great possibilities for inexpensive fine prints. Half-tone photo-engraving, because of its visible screen, may always be beyond the realm of the fine print, but a modern photo-engraver's camera can do wonders with the simple line-cut. How many non-commercial artists are familiar with water-color printing? Or even the limited but striking effects afforded by the silk-screen (or stencil) processes? All of these methods offer the use of color—and in the light of the recent tremendous sales of reproduced paintings, color is probably necessary in any print directed at a mass audience.

True, to make really exhaustive use of most of these processes requires belief in, and some organization of, a mass market for fine art. Wide-scale promotion requires money, but money has never been difficult to find to promote a reasonably sure thing. The printing companies should be willing to coöperate—possibly even to the point of direct subsidy. The market unquestionably exists. Cézanne reproductions have been selling in the ten-cent stores for a long time. The necessary initiative, however, must come from the artist who will seriously investigate and adapt his art to the facilities that the technicians have dumped in his lap. Only when the print is taken off the hand press and placed on the high-speed rotary will it become what it has often been called—"the democratic art."

CROCKETT JOHNSON.



Robert Joyce

The Reconciliation of Hostile Ideas

FOUR WAYS OF PHILOSOPHY, *by Irwin Edman. Henry Holt & Co.* $1.50.

THE passion of the philosophers for mutual contradiction and mutual extermination has always been a bit shocking to the layman, who easily gets the impression that this is their sole concern and occupation, and often wonders why they do not get together as scientists do, particularly natural scientists, on some basis of agreement. There have been various explanations of the disparity of the schools. Hegel, for example, held that the history of philosophy is a complicated process culminating in his own system, which embodied the doctrines of all previous systems as partial truths. In contrast to Hegel are the unhistorical historians of philosophy who think they have suddenly hit upon the total truth, and that all previous systems are simply false and perfidious. Professor Edman, in the present book, adopts still another view.

While he denies progress in philosophy, and inclines to naturalism, he also finds a great deal of truth in rationalism, mysticism, and "social criticism," and believes that each of these philosophies involves, and depends upon, the others. But it is not always clear whether the truth he discovers in these hostile schools is objective or merely subjective, that is, whether it reflects the objective world or only human aspiration. "That the talk of philosophers should differ," he explains, "is for exactly the same reason that the speech of poets differs. For philosophy has mistaken its function in arrogating to itself the notion that it is either a transcript of reality or a specific program of life. It is but a lyric. . . ." This passage seems to confine philosophy to subjective truth, but there are many passages of an opposite import.

Another thing that is not at all clear is the alleged interdependence of the schools and their partial reconciliation. The kind of argument the author uses can be illustrated by the following: since all the schools must accept sensation as an unproved and ineffable datum (!), all the schools must recognize a certain truth in mysticism. Again: since the mystic rejects the world he must recognize a certain truth in "social criticism." To this a number of objections must be made. In the first place, sensations are not "ineffable" nor do all mystics reject the world and certainly few of them are social critics. Moreover, the mystic's central claim that reality is One and that he can become one with this One certainly contradicts the positions of the other schools as stated by Professor Edman. Throughout this discussion there seems to be a confusion between philosophical theories such as mysticism and rationalism and the matter-of-fact employment of sense-data and reason. The fact that the mystic reasons and the rationalist makes use of sensations does not prove, however subtly the argument may be developed, that mysticism and rationalism are partially compatible or interdependent.

There are, of course, many fine insights in the book which one can often admire without fully accepting, but it would be difficult to render them briefly, since they depend far more on delicate turns of phrase than on novelty of thought. For the same reason, many dubious contentions must be left uncriticized. There is one passage, however, which even this short review cannot ignore, for it shows a complete collapse of that tolerance and liberalism which Professor Edman usually displays, even to a fault. "So far as means are concerned," he says, "a revolutionary government behaves very much like a fascist one. Liquidation and blood purge are nice distinctions, but they are Russian and German terms for the same thing." Can Professor Edman really see no difference between the sudden assassination of Von Schleicher and his wife and the public trial and confession of Zinoviev and Kamenev attended by lawyers and foreign correspondents, many of whom were convinced that crimes had been proved which mean death in any country? Can he believe himself justified in assuming without any discussion whatever that the evidence accumulated in the course of months of patient research and many regional trials was worthless, that the confessions were impersonations by actors or gramophone records or something else equally fantastic? Professor Edman labors hard to show us the truth inherent in the conflicting systems of philosophy—even in the wildest mysticism, but he condemns the legal system of the Soviet Union without a word of explanation. The liberal and fairminded tone of the book as a whole would suggest, however, that this passage was rather a stereotype borrowed from others than a considered thought of the author.

V. J. McGILL.

Brief Reviews

SERENADE, by James M. Cain. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

Cain's second novel is about a young opera singer, John Howard Sharp, who loses his voice twice. Both times he loses it in the presence of an orchestra conductor who is the only man who can bring out the latent homosexuality in the singer. Around that is built the tragedy of Sharp and Juana, the "dumb little *muchacha*" he falls in love with in Mexico. The two leave Mexico for Hollywood and New York. When Juana learns about Hawes, the conductor, she coolly murders him to save Sharp. Of course, nobody is saved, and the story ends with Sharp at Juana's funeral in the little Mexican church where first he slept with her.

Bad proportions keep *Serenade* from being the interesting study it could have been. The homosexual angle, we feel, would be far-fetched even for Freud or Havelock Ellis, and Juana's spree at Hawes's expense leans toward melodrama. On the credit side, however, there is the fine musical feeling throughout, excellent portraits of Hawes, Captain Connors, who would have been a Lionel Barrymore sea-captain at the hands of a less-skilled craftsman, and the producers in Hollywood. It has speed to spare and does not carry a burden of unnecessary detail.

R. H. R.

NATIONAL LAWYERS' GUILD QUARTERLY. *December 1937. Vol. I, No. 1.* 50c.

Last spring, the National Lawyers' Guild was formed to "function as an effective social force in the service of the people to the end that human rights shall be regarded as more sacred than property rights." The first issue of the Guild's *Quarterly* reflects this constructive program. A departure from

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the usual dull compendium of legalistic tracts, the *Quarterly* sets out to discuss questions that concern the liberal rank-and-file lawyers, the socially-minded in the profession who desire to participate in the effort to mold a better society. The practice of law has greater meaning to this group than its usual role as a weapon through which big business can falsify and circumvent legislation.

The present *Quarterly* includes Senator Robert LaFollette's "Management, Too, Must Be Responsible," which concludes: "Until management is prepared decently and straightforwardly to discharge its duties to its workers, its government, and its public, it can ill afford to speak of the responsibility of labor." Professor Charles A. Beard scoffs at the idea that the Supreme Court is composed of a body of supermen divinely unaffected by the times —a conception the Liberty League finds useful to ballyhoo. An estimate of the National Labor Relations Board and its relationship to the A. F. of L.-C.I.O. rivalry clarifies the position of the N.L.R.B., and forms an effective answer to the charges from the extreme Right that the board is "unfair." And Isidor Lazurus's "The Economic Crisis in the Legal Profession" is of particular interest to those who realize that organization of professionals is vital in the struggle against growing fascism.

The *Quarterly* has value not only for lawyers but for anyone interested in informative discussion of pressing contemporary problems. B. M.

RETREAT OF THE WEST, *by No-Yong Park. Hale, Cushman & Flint, Inc.* $3.

Dr. Park's account of "the white man's adventure in eastern Asia" does little honor to a Chinese intellectual at a time so critical in the life of his country. His thesis is that the history of civilization has been a movement of three main conflicts between the white and the yellow man. The first phase was the "tutelage" of Europe under Asiatic conquerors, the Huns, Mongols, and Turks. The white man then succeeded in beating the Turkish invasion back into Asia and thus began the second phase, the white man's advance into Asia. The third phase opened with the "awakening" of Japan in the middle of the last century and, thenceforth, the steady retreat of the white man from Asia. The present Sino-Japanese conflict, according to Dr. Park, is but an episode in this last phase.

There is no imperialism, capitalism, or national liberation in Dr. Park's vocabulary. He throws all historical forces into two all-inclusive categories: white man and yellow man. As a result, he actually glorifies the present Japanese conquest as a step in the retreat of the white man rather than as a step in the conquest and submergence of his own people, the Chinese. He ignores the fact that the Japanese militarist, despite the color of his skin, is an ally of the German and Italian fascist, not a brother of the other eastern peoples whose interests lie with all oppressed humanity, no matter what their color. There is a dangerous clique of pro-Japanese politicians still in the councils of the Nanking government. Dr. Park is their intellectual counterpart. T. D.

★

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Ibsen on Broadway

ALL the nice things that may be said about Mr. Jed Harris's revival of *A Doll's House* (now at the Morosco Theatre) we must reserve for the first two acts. Here is about the best that Broadway can offer. Consummate craftsmanship in the set and costumes by Mr. Oenslager, in the direction by Mr. Harris, in the acting by Ruth Gordon and Mr. Paul Lukas. One of the cleverest exploitations of an Ibsen play we have ever seen, and excellent dramatic entertainment. That is, for the first two acts. Two minutes after the opening of the third act we have an object lesson in the inability of "technique" to convey genuine emotion and thought. The improvisations on a theme by Ibsen, begun in the preceding acts, peter out into unmitigated nonsense. During the evening we waited for the miracle to happen. We waited for the Broadway actors to become the intensely rationalized characters of Ibsen. Alas, the miracle didn't happen. Nora's rebellious doorslam meant no more than Miss Gordon's final exit. The play had been sacrificed to the personalities of the players. We had Paul Lukas's elegance and distinction; we had Dennis King's voice; we had Sam Jaffe's magnificent head; we had Margaret Walker's charm; we had Ruth Gordon running the gamut of the Broadway virtues from cuteness to pathos; we had, in short, a fine time; but we hadn't a gleam of Ibsen. For that, the miracle of miracles would have to come to pass. Broadway would have to change its nature. Clever exploitation of a role or a whole play by actors and director may result in a "hit": it has little to do with the difficult business of reviving a classic in some of its power and beauty.

Any revival of a problem play must raise the question as to how the problem has been interpreted. For the most part Mr. Harris is inclined to let the problem look after itself. He introduces into the play a certain spurious note of modernity. The costumes are more or less in period; but the emphases, the emotional stresses, are in all cases contemporary. This may be good showmanship. On the other hand, it's bad art, and the outcome of a profound lack of historical or even literary education. Ibsen's play is something more than an historical document; it is also something more than a dramatic study of the idiosyncrasies of frustrated womanhood. It is a study of the growth and rebellion of a woman. Mr. Harris's understanding of the play would seem to be limited to the action of the first two acts: the third act merely embarrasses him. With the able assistance of Miss Gordon he can show you the Nora who may be found wherever the doll's house of the bourgeois family still lingers. You may see her at any bridge party. She eats too many sweets; she reads the latest gossip by Winchell or Ed Sullivan; she mothers her unfortunate offspring into the last degrees of neuroticism. It is Miss Claire Booth's Nora, perhaps; not Ibsen's. Insulated within the inner core of bourgeois life, history has passed her over and left her to the mercies of the psychoanalyst and the Broadway showman; while the other Nora has gone on, through a generation of education in unions and other organizations, to identify her own growing pains with the entire ache of the dispossessed. Whether she likes it or not she knows that her doll's house has been blown skyhigh by the big guns of capitalism. She realizes now that her suffragette doorslam was a feeble note in comparison with the enormous explosions which dishoused women in millions. She has no doll's house in which to become hysterical. Vast factories and mills absorb her. She is no longer a skylark, a lollypop, or animated doll. She is a worker. The inexorable progression of historical logic, of which Ibsen was foggily aware, has torn apart forever the illusions of the doll. Those women who have not yet grown to realize that the woman-problem is inseparably bound up with the problem of society as a whole are the parasites of their sex. We never thought to see Ibsen's symbol of rebellious womanhood interpreted as one of these. Only the cheap effect-mongering showmanship of Broadway could be guilty of such asininity. And it is. Instead of a woman of exceptional character struggling through her own frustrations and the oppressions of the bourgeois family, we are shown a cute little girl galloping from hysteria to childishness and then back to hysteria again for a final blowout. It's entertaining; it's charming; it's clever, effective, shrewd, appealing, disarming, vivacious, pleasant; and absolutely insignificant. In short, it's Broadway at its best. Go and see it.

At the Hudson Theatre Elsa Moses presents *Western Waters* by Richard Carlson. The only possible incentive for the production of such a play is the hope that it will bring in some profit or prestige. That this inept comedy fails to do either may be taken as a measure of its merit. The actors, Messrs. Van Heflin, Robert Thomsen, Thomas Gomez, and the Misses Maxine Stuart and Joan Wheeler are in no way to blame for this exhibition of Broadway at its worst.

MICHAEL SAYERS.

Robust, Anti-War Satire at the Artef

THERE are more than a million Jews in New York, and why most of them don't rush to Sixty-third Street to see the Artef Players in *The Good Soldier Schweik* is more than this spectator can understand.

Here is a show that sticks the brass hats up in the pillory and rotten-eggs them with satire until they're a sight to behold. It takes the fustian pretensions of the military caste and their clerical and bourgeois masters, and subjects them to the acid test of a sanity so simple that it passes for simple-mindedness, and reveals the masters of the lunatics. A loosely-knit, quiet, beautifully acted version of the famous novel by Jaroslavl Hasek, *The Good Soldier Schweik* represents a departure for the Artef from its tenser moods. It's the Artef letting itself go, taking time out to laugh, and giving the audience a chance to relax, in between those fighting plays that send Artef audiences out with clenched fists and knitted brows.

The audience was enjoying every minute of it, too, the night we were there, and buttons were popping quietly in all directions as Schweik's dumb wise-cracks speared the stuffed shirts. But it was a meager audience, and that seems a shame. For all those who can follow Yiddish dialogue (and for the others there is a full synopsis) can find a couple of hours of hilarious entertainment at the Artef, and watch some of the finest acting to be met with in New York today. To those who have read the novel, Michael Goldstein will be their wildest dreams of a perfect Schweik come to life. There were so many different ways in which the characterization could have been spoiled, so many side roads of exaggeration down which Goldstein might have blundered, that his success is a miracle of rightness. The show may not be a model of construction, or pace, or some other of the requirements indispensable for the super-

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esthete. But what is being spoken about here is an evening of robust laughter with some sense to it. And what more do you want in a comedy? Elephants?

HERMAN MICHELSON.

Dances of Protest

MARTHA GRAHAM gave her second concert at the Guild Theatre, presented for the first time her *American Lyric* (*Dance of Assembly*), the music by Alex North; Lillian Shapero, recently returned from the Soviet Union, appeared at the 92nd Street Y.M.H.A.; the Young Choreographers of the Federal Dance Theatre opened their series of afternoon children's performances at the 49th Street Theatre; Hanya Holm made her New York debut at Mecca Temple with a more or less revised version of her concert last summer at Bennington in Vermont; Angna Enters continued at the Alvin Theatre, presenting her satire on British diplomacy, *London Bridge Is Falling Down,* for the first time; Shan-Kar continued at the St. James Theatre, and the W.P.A. Dance Theatre with Tamiris and her *How Long Brethren?* at the 49th Street Theatre. New York is still in the throes of its end-of-the-year dance fest.

Uday Shan-Kar is exotic; his Hindu dances, mainly concerned with religious themes and folk pantomime, exceedingly delicate; his rhythms and music strange, pleasing. For one, however, I should like to see in his dancing some evidence of the rising proletarian and revolutionary sentiment in India.

Martha Graham's first concert of the season produced two new solos, *Deep Song* and *Immediate Tragedy* (*Dance of Dedication*)—both with music by Henry Cowell and both relating to Spain. *Deep Song* is an uncommonly tense portrait, rather a motive in anguish, almost frenzy, the reaction of the artist, of anyone sensitive, this side of the Atlantic to the horrors and suffering inflicted on the Spanish people by the barbaric fascist invasion. *Immediate Tragedy* (*Dance of Dedication*), an invocation, logically follows *Deep Song,* although its title might prove a bit confusing. *Deep Song* is more the *Tragedy; Dance of Dedication* is the more positive counterstatement which develops inevitably out of the realization of the *Tragedy. The Dance of Dedication* is no less indigenously the expression of American sentiment—neither dance is a pictorial transcription of the Spanish scene—and in simple phrases, too calm and abstract, perhaps, because it follows the emotionally moving *Deep Song,* it is a call to action.

Martha Graham's *American Lyric* is a simple dance in abstract patterns, a lyric tone poem, a buoyant, healthy affirmation of the American belief in the right of assembly. It is a dance with its roots well immersed in the American (revolutionary) tradition, and, like much of the dancer's material, has special bearing on the contemporary scene. With Automat pickets getting thirty, sixty, and ninety days for peacefully petitioning the American public, with "Louis XIV" Hague of New Jersey flatly denying the American constitutional right of assemblage, with the industrial world shot with rats of various hues to prevent ordinary meetings of the American people, it is high time for the American Whitmans to sing and paint and dance again the simple democratic beliefs in the rights of man. Such is the character of Martha Graham's simple and effective composition, a pamphlet in movement against whatever reactionary forces would throttle the liberties of Americans.

Alex North, who has written the excellent anti-fascist dance scores for Anna Sokolow's *War Poem, Façade,* and *Slaughter of the Innocents,* supplies the singularly apt music for *American Lyric.* He is also responsible for the arrangement of Lily Mehlman's simple and naïve *Folk Dances of all Nations* for the W.P.A. children's concerts.

Angna Enters does not consider herself a dancer, and in her last compositions for the theater, *T'Ang* (*Chinese dynastic*) *Japan "Defends" Itself* and *A Modern Totalitarian Hero,* has moved to a point where she uses practically no dance movement at all. *Japan "Defends" Itself* is a picture of a Chinese coolie, basket on her back, attempting an unsuccessful escape from a Japanese ærial bombardment. *A Modern Totalitarian Hero* is the story of a gas-masked, bemedalled, goose-stepping, powder-puff of a military man who tears the petals from a rose whose thorns had pricked him—for which bravery he rewards himself with another medal. The satire, or irony, is thin, scarcely profound, but the intentions are good.

What was a bit foreign to the program, however, and to Angna Enters's obvious hatred of the fascist in any stage of his development, was the rather chauvinistic satire on the Chinese of the T'Ang dynasty, which Miss Enters ought to explain.

The Federal Dance Theater renewed its activities, as announced, with the revival of Tamiris's exciting *How Long Brethren?,* the suite of Negro songs of protest.

The first half of the W.P.A. program was given to the early Negro spirituals of the dancer, *Swing Low, Go Down Moses,* and *Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho*—which still retain their moving lyric quality. However, they lack the impact of the more direct and more important content of the contemporary songs of protest.

On the W.P.A. afternoon concerts are also Roger Pryor Dodge's ballet *The Little Mermaid* and Nadia Chilkovsky's surprisingly delightful *Mother Goose on Parade* (for which Genevieve Pitot has done a brilliant score). Nadia Chilkovsky, who has been seen before in revolutionary dance compositions, has taken such familiar Mother Goose characters as Simple Simon, the Pied Piper, and the Crooked Man, and weaved around them the simple proletarian story of the rise of the "hungry characters" against the king, the

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queen, their masked guards, the witch, and the top-hat Crooked Man—so that the Old Woman of the Shoe, Old Mother Hubbard, and Simple Simon might have that "penny" to buy the pie or the bone for the bare cupboard. It is a touching narrative, excellently choreographed, and well performed.

Hanya Holm's concert presented the most elaborate set yet seen in a New York modern dance recital, the stage set more or less a replica of the Bennington set and done by Arch Lauterer. The dances themselves were reported on from Bennington last August. The only addition was the final movement to *Trend, Assurance—"A world primal again"* which, coming after the world in a cataclysm of destruction, points the way, in abstract composition, to a united-front action to prevent the repetition of a world dominated by cant, greed, and military domination. The excellence of the composition lies principally in the use of mass effects and leads me to repeat that Hanya Holm would do best in mass rally demonstrations like *One-Sixth of the Earth*. As yet her dances are pretty well intellectual conceptions. It will be interesting to watch what she will do with the more human conflicts of the American scene as she increases her knowledge of it. Hanya Holm has been in America less than six years.

Much of Lillian Shapero's concert was a repetition of previously presented compositions. Her new works, however, indicate no advance over her heavily stylized manner. *Crisis,* for all its anti-fascist program note, is pretty much devoid of warmth or conviction; and her *Peasant Girl (Katya Comes to Town)*—evidently derived from the Soviet Union—is rather lacking in taste. Lillian Shapero should do well to consult some of the more mature people with whose program she expresses sympathy. Her dances lack a human ideological understanding.

OWEN BURKE.

Sandburg, Swing, and Shan-Kar

OUT of the astonishing diversity of holiday releases, one set emerges boldly as a generous slice of honest-to-God Americana, a batch of homespun tunes from *The American Songbag* sung to his own guitar accompaniments by the compiler of the book and a true native minstrel, Carl Sandburg. His singing and playing (in an informal, lusty style that is all his own) are known and loved all over the country, but although Victor made a batch of recordings years ago, it issued only one and soon withdrew that. It remained for Musicraft to catch him for a day, on the wing as it were, and wax eight of his pieces (Album No. 11), ranging from the plaintive "Foggy, Foggy Dew" and "I'm Sad and I'm Lonely" to the dry humor of "The Good Boy" and "Mama Have You Heard the News?" There's also the buckaroo air, "I Ride an Old Paint"; three "woven" spirituals (including a superb oath of freedom); and an experiment in non-

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sense, "The Horse Named Bill," the one thing in the set that sounds a bit phony and smart-alecky. But the first record is the sensation: it alone would make the album a "must." The "Gallows Song" (Sam Hall), as Sandburg does it, is as uncompromising, vivid, and terrifying a realistic depiction of the seamy side of American life as you'll ever find. For the rest Sandburg provides delightful and often moving entertainment; there's straight and unforgettable documentation in the "Gallows Song."

The blues singers, of whom the late Bessie Smith was probably the greatest of all, extended the boundary of popular song well back into folksong territory. Columbia does well to issue a memorial album of the best of her extraordinary performances, twelve record sides culled from the some 160 she made between 1922 and 1929 (Columbia 3171/6D). Incidentally, swing fans can learn plenty about the origins of their art both from Bessie's own vocalizing and the amazing playing of her accompanists, who included such men as Louis Armstrong, James P. Johnson (now almost forgotten, but one of the greatest hot pianists of his day), Fletcher Henderson, Joe Smith, Charlie Green, and Fred Longshaw.

In the contemporary swing field the captivating Maxine Sullivan is still way out in front, in artistry as well as popularity. After the memorable Loch Lomond (No. 3654), Vocalion has issued two more revitalized old tunes nearly as good: "Annie Laurie" (with "Blue Skies" on No. 3679) and "Darling Nellie Gray" (with "The Folks Who Live on the Hill" on No. 3845). Then Miss Sullivan goes on to show what she can do with Gershwin and Cole Porter tunes: "Nice Work If You Can Get It" and "Easy to Love" (No. 3848), and she can do plenty.

The current hit, rapidly assuming smash proportions, is, of course, "Bei mir bist du schön," "Americanized," as the record companies have it, by Cahn and Chaplin from the old Jacobs-Secunda version. Lombardo plays it on Victor 25739, Glen Gray on Decca 1575, and Russ Morgan on Brunswick 8037, but the most popular disk is the first in the field, Decca 1562, by the Andrews Sisters.

Among the best of the swingers: Duke Ellington with "Dusk in the Desert" and "Chatter-Box" (Brunswick 8029), "Crescendo in Blue" and "Diminuendo in Blue" (Brunswick 8004); Benny Goodman in "Loch Lomond" and "Camel Hop" (Victor 25717), "Life Goes to a Party" and "If Dreams Come True" (Victor 25726), "I'm a Ding Dong Daddy" and "Where or When" (Victor 25725); Teddy Wilson in piano solos of "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea" and "Don't Blame Me" (Brunswick 8025).

From Tin Pan Alley to the Belgian Congo and India isn't such a jump as might be imagined. Swing fans will be more at home in Africa, but a Mr. Vishnudass Shirali can show even Gene Krupa a few tricks in virtuoso drumming. He is to be heard on Side 5 of the Hindu Music album by Shan-Kar's musicians (Victor Set M-382)—a collection that no devotee of the Indian dancer can afford to

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miss. The set contains some remarkable music and is splendidly recorded, but there is a slight touch of chi-chi to it, possibly due in some measure to the rapturous treatise on Hindu art and instruments—by Basanta Koomar Roy—that accompanies it. I got more satisfaction out of the Belgian Congo set, superbly re-recorded from sound films made by the Denis-Roosevelt Expedition and issued in an album by the Reeves-Sound Studios, New York. This is a singular and authentic mine of primitive ceremonial music: choral songs and dances, the great xylophone at Lubero, the royal Watusi drums, and circumcision rituals. There is an excellent illustrated booklet that adds to the set's anthropological value, but like the Shan-Kar album it's of uncommon interest to the musical amateur. Ballet dancers and students will find both sets indispensable.

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(Times given are Eastern Standard, but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

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President Roosevelt. The President speaks at the annual Jackson Day dinner, Sat., Jan. 8, 9:30 p.m., N.B.C. red and C.B.S.

Arturo Toscanini. The maestro conducts another in his ten-concert series, Sat., Jan. 8, 10 p.m., N.B.C. red and blue.

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Literary Section

EDITORS: MICHAEL GOLD, HORACE GREGORY, GRANVILLE HICKS, JOSHUA KUNITZ

NEW MASSES, JANUARY 11, 1938, VOL. XXVI, NO. 3, NEW YORK, N. Y.; IN TWO SECTIONS, OF WHICH THIS IS SECTION TWO

A Gun Is Watered

By Ted Allan

IT was hot. The earth was hot. The air was hot. Everything was hot. It was Sunday and the boys were resting, not because it was Sunday but because they were tired.

"What's the date?" asked Butterley.

"What's the difference?" answered Durnor.

Butterley, number one machine-gunner, was tired. First the boys had been ordered to march through Villanueva de la Cañada and then on to Brunete; but when they came to Villanueva de la Cañada, they found that if they were going to march through it they had to take it first. They took it. After sixteen hours of fighting. So Butterley was tired.

"Got a cigarette?" he asked.

"You know damned well I haven't got a cigarette," Durnor said.

"I know, but it's nice asking. Say, what the hell's holdin' up the food?"

"We must have advanced too far."

"Advanced too far? Is that a reason for not getting our rations?"

"The kitchen hasn't caught up with us yet."

"Watta hell's the kitchen gotta do with it?" Butterley wanted to know.

"Well, it's the kitchen that hands out the rations, isn't it?"

"Bunch o' bloody bastards runnin' that kitchen if you ask me."

"Yes."

Butterley scratched his head and looked around. He peeked over the small pile of sand-bags that hid his machine-gun. It was the best gun in the army. There was never any better made. All right, maybe they'd made some just as good, but never better. It was a Soviet gun. And it turned up and down and from side to side. Butterley had never handled a machine-gun in his life before he came to Spain. But this gun he could handle the way a pianist handles the keys of a piano. Even better. He cleaned it twice a day. He watered it once a day. No one was allowed to touch it. No one was allowed to carry it. He built himself a special harness and pulled the gun himself. He felt bad when he wasn't near it. He called it Mother Bloor. Never had a man loved a woman with the devotion that Butterley felt toward Mother Bloor. The gun was all right, so he turned back to Durnor.

"This dug-out's lousy."

"What's lousy about it?"

"It's not deep enough."

"Well, let's make it deeper."

"Aw, I'm too tired."

"Well then stop squawking."

"Who's squawking?"

"No one. Me."

Butterley squatted. Durnor was his superior officer. They were quiet for a long while. They paid no attention to the occasional rifle-fire. Butterley fished in his pockets for a cigarette. Sometimes you thought you were out of cigarettes, and then you found one. They tasted better then. You even appreciated a Spanish cigarette after a while. Helluva note though, fighting for days, going ahead, going ahead, then stopping and not having a cigarette. Helluva note. Butterley thought about it a long while.

"Hey, Durnor!"

Durnor didn't answer. His eyes were fixed on the earth in front of him. His curly hair hung below his helmet. He looked at his long lean hands, noticing the heavy dirt in his fingernails. A man thinks the most remarkable thoughts, he said to himself.

"Hey, Durnor!"

"Yes."

"How long do you think this is goin' to last?"

"God, you asked that yesterday, remember?"

"But you didn't answer."

"You got your answer all right."

"I'm homesick."

"Shut up."

"Well, I'm homesick, godamit!"

"Listen, Butterley, I've been here a long time and I'm telling you that you either shut up and stop thinking about it or you ask to get out right away. That's the beginning of a crack-up."

"Aw, I don't crack up."

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"All right then, shut up."
"Durnor?"
"Now what?"
"You ain't sore at me, are you?"
"Don't be an ass. Forget it."
"Durnor, what's the date?"
"Hell, I don't know."
"July fourth was on a Sunday, wasn't it? Then Sunday fourth, Monday fifth, Tuesday sixth—that's when we took that town with Canada attached to it."
"It's pronounced Canyada, not Canada."
"Okay, Canyada, but it's spelled the same."
"The 'n' has a twiddle."
"You college guys are always findin' twiddles."
"All right, all right, figure out the date."
"Yeh, lessee. Sunday fourth, Monday fifth, Tuesday sixth, Wednesday seventh, Thursday eighth, Friday ninth, Saturday tenth, Sunday eleventh . . . say it's the eleventh."
"Well, well, well, now you know. Now what?"
"It's good to know the date, ain't it?"
"Yes. Very good. Tomorrow's the twelfth."
"Yeh. Say, Durnor?"
"Yes."
"We have no water for Mother Bloor."
"When did you water her last?"
"Yesterday."
"That's bad."
"I know. Why the hell don't they bring us water? I ain't had a drink since yesterday."
"I thought you were worrying about Mother Bloor."
"Sure. But if we're both not watered, it's twice as bad, ain't it?"
"I suppose so."
"Say, you know the travers lock ain't been workin' so good."
"Fix it then."
"Fix it then! With what? Fix it then!"
"If you can't fix it, then shut up."
"Well, anyhow, it's the best gun in the battalion, in the whole bleddy army."
"That's right."
"I wish I had some water for it. The sun makes it too hot. If there's gonna be action today, it won't be good for it."
"There won't be any action today."
"How do you know?"
"They're as tired as we are, and they've been retreating. It'll take them some time before they're ready to counter-attack."
"Think we'll have some water tomorrow?"
"I hope so, but I do wish to hell I had a cigarette."
"You said it. Maybe some o' the boys . . ."
"Forget it."
"Christ, we could split one between us."
"Forget it, I told you."
"No harm askin'."
"Sometimes for such a good machine-gunner you can be a good pain in the neck."
"Who the hell mentioned it, me or you?"
"Me. I'm sorry. But forget it, Christ, forget it!"
"Say . . . you ain't gettin' nerves, are you?"
"Shut up."

Butterley peeked through the parapet, then looked at his gun.
"Gee, it's quiet."
"Too quiet."
"Funny how when it's quiet a guy gets the jitters and when there's noise a guy still gets the jitters. Seems a guy's always gettin' the jitters. Say you know what's funny?"
"No. What?"
"Well, remember in the movies when a guy gets hit?"
"So what?"
"Remember how he bends over first, then he looks at the sky, and then he takes time to turn around, and then he flops."
"So?"
"Well, it's funny because that's what happens."
"Oh, shut up. Tell me, Butterley, what did you do back home?"
"Me? Thought you knew. I was a seaman and a reporter."
"A reporter? Really?"
"Well, not exactly a reporter. You see I used to get the news and some other guys wrote it."
"What papers?"
"Our paper. The seamen's paper. It was a swell paper. It had two pages. Front and back. And anyways it was a damned sight better'n those big printed papers because it told the truth. We sold it for a penny. If you didn't have a penny, we gave it away for nothin'. Gee-ze, it was a swell paper. Say, what did you do back home?"
"I? I studied how to split the atom."
"Huh?"
"An atom is a very little thing. It's, well, it's so little you can't see it."
"Like a microbe."
"Even smaller."
"Smaller'n a microbe!"
"A microbe is made up of atoms. Everything is."
"An' you hadda split it! Christ!"
"Well, I didn't really."
"But gee-ze—smallern' a microbe. Must be a lotta those things around here, eh?"
"Atoms? Sure, there always are."
"Yeh, but thinka how many atoms're bein' split when a bomb drops."
Durnor chuckled. "Yes."
"I never knew much about those things. Never knew I had to. Never knew they were around for that matter. But there's plenty I know. Plenty. An' I'm learnin' plenty here too."
"Sure you are," said Durnor.
"But they can't win, can they?" Butterley asked.
"Not while you're number one machine-gunner in the second company of the Lincoln-Washington battalion."
"No, no kiddin', waddya think? Can they win?"
"We've been advancing, haven't we? We've been advancing for a whole week."
"Yeh. But now we're sorta resting."
"That's how a war is fought."
"But the Italians keep comin'."
"That's why we're here."

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"Hell! Anyway they can't fight."

"Who can't fight?" Durnor asked.

"The Italians, who do you think?"

"Why do you say that?"

"Why do I say that? Look what happened at that place called Guada—something."

"Guadalajara. Yes. But do you know who was fighting them?"

"Naturally, I know. So what?"

"Well, can the Italians fight?"

"Say, what the hell are you talkin' about? The Spaniards made 'em run like hell or don't you know that?"

"Well, it so happens there's a bunch of Italians in a battalion called the Garibaldi and they're in our army and they can fight."

"I ain't thoughta that."

"I know. But think of it."

"Anyway, fascists can't fight. If they didn't have more planes and guns and tanks, we'd beat 'em in a week, the bastards."

The sun still shone. It was a big red sun. It was quiet. No action. No movement. Sometimes a breeze came down from the mountains and waved the long grass in front of the trenches. The fascists were entrenched on a hill. You could see their trench systems. There were no olive trees or grape vines here as there had been on Jarama. Mostly open country.

In the next dug-out were three Americans. One of them had to relieve himself. He couldn't stand since the fascists could see any movement below them. He crawled out on his belly and got over on his side.

Butterley heard a strange sound.

"What's that?"

"What's what?"

Durnor hadn't heard anything.

"Water!"

"Water?"

"Listen . . ."

Butterley poked his head above the ground. He almost choked. Durnor saw him go livid.

"You paw-lit-ically un-de-veloped son of a bitch! Go read a book! You . . . you . . ."

He couldn't talk.

"Durnor! Why, the bastard! Durnor! Look what he's doing on my machine-gun. . . . Why the pawlitically undeveloped son of a . . . God, I'll kill him. So help me. Why the . . ."

Durnor sprang to his feet and grabbed Butterley. He looked toward the gun and chuckled.

"Easy, easy, get your head down and shut up. You wanted it watered, didn't you?"

"Watered?" Butterley spluttered. "He's a spy, I tell you. An achronist. A son-of-a-bitch achronist."

"Anarchist."

"Yeh, achronist. God, I'll kill him."

"Who is he?"

"That Chrysler guy from Detroit."

"He's a good man."

"A good man? A bastard. On my machine-gun. On my machine-gun."

"You wanted it watered, didn't you? Well, you got it watered."

"It'll kill the gun. It won't work. How could a guy do such a thing?"

"Well, a guy has to, hasn't he?"

"Who's stoppin' him? But on my gun, on my machine-gun!"

"Forget it."

"I'll fix him. I'll fix his gun."

"Sure. Put it out of commission."

"Okay, okay. But he should be disciplined. I bet he's an achronist."

"Look, it's not *achronist*. It's *anarchist*. And anarchists don't necessarily do such things on guns. Sometimes with the Trotskyites they swipe them from the front to make a revolution from behind and some of them are good fighters, but it's *anarchist, anarchist*, not achronist . . ."

"Okay, okay, what's the difference? On my gun. On *my* gun!"

They heard the familiar sound of something that sounded like thunder but not quite. They flung themselves to the earth. The shells were coming close. Thunder. Earth flew over them.

"Just keep your head down."

"No, I'll get up and do a dance."

Butterley was sore.

Whine. Ear-splitting noise. Butterley didn't finish what he had to say. Again. Close. Too close. Fear. Dirt. Black acrid smoke.

"Listen, Durnor, can you hear me?"

"Keep your head down."

"Durnor, that extra travers lock in my pocket, don't forget it's in my right pocket."

"Nut, if anything gets you, it gets me."

"I can't hear you. Remember it's in my right pocket."

"Okay."

It became louder and they heard the sputter of machine-guns. They looked at each other and smiled.

"Okay, Butterley boy, get her ready for action."

Durnor looked through the parapet.

"Here to the left."

Butterley pulled the sand-bags from the side of the gun, got up on the ledge, and looking down wiped it with his sleeve in disgust.

"Good thing you got it watered, Butterley."

Butterley didn't answer. He swung the safety and turned his gun to the left. The shelling had died down. There was still heavy rifle and machine-gun fire. Like a million firecrackers going off at the same time.

"Tell Mike we're in position."

"Hey, Mike, we're in position. He says okay. He's in position too."

"Okay. Now kid, wait till they get near and then give it to them. You know how. Take your aim and in short spurts."

Butterley crouched behind the shield, his two thumbs on the trigger ready for action.

"Moors."

Tat-tat-tat.

"You're shooting too high," Durnor yelled.

"Listen, who's shootin'?"

"I'm telling you, you're shooting too high. Obey orders."

Tat-tat-tat. Rat-tat-tat. Durnor thought of how

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beautiful it sounded when it came from your own gun. Butterley swung the gun easily, taking careful aim.

Durnor poked his head above the ground. "Mike, better send for more ammunition. Oh, hell . . . hell . . . hell . . ."

"Whatsa matter?" asked Butterley.

"Nothing. Keep shooting. Nothing. Oh, damit . . . damit . . ."

"Whatsa matter, are you hit?"

"Yes. But keep shooting. Just keep shooting, damit."

"I am shootin'. Can't you hear?"

"All right, all right. Hell . . ."

"Bad?" Butterley couldn't take his eye from the gun. The machine-gun spat out a steady stream.

"No. No."

"I can't hear you. Are you hit bad?"

"No."

"Where?"

"Stomach."

"I can't hear you, damn it. Speak louder."

"Hell . . . Butter . . . good ol' . . . you *can* say No Pasaran . . . thought was a lie . . . keep shooting, kid, keep shooting. . . ."

"They're runnin' back!"

"Hell . . ."

"They're runnin' back, Durnor. They're runnin'. Good ol' Mother Bloor. How are yuh, Durnor kid? Christ, kid. Durnor! Oh, Durnor kid. Durnor boy. Mike . . . Durnor . . . gee-ze!"

He looked at the body and then placed his head wearily on the gun and cried, and for the second time that day the gun was watered.

Two Revolutionary Writers

RALPH BATES: A WRITER IN ARMS

By Dorothy Brewster

RALPH BATES's third novel, *Rainbow Fish,* grew out of an image. "Two days after the Revolution began," he wrote from Spain in a letter, "I was standing on a bluff overlooking a lake in the Enchanted Range of the Leridan Pyrenees. As I watched, the lake fishermen drew in their nets with a fine catch of trout. The sunlight upon those fish was so very lovely that I immediately wanted to write (a rare emotion with me). I began the novel that afternoon, to continue it at intervals during the other kind of work which at once had to be taken up. If I remember the book now, it still brings that image of trout struggling in a silver net."

The book is about seven outcasts, and the net they struggle in is not very silvery. Nor is there any escape for them. It seems at first glance a novel about defeat; and that is surprising, coming as it did after the two novels concerning Spain, in which all the leading characters, whether peasants, intellectuals, or city workers, were busy about the building of a new order. But more carefully looked at, *Rainbow Fish* is an affirmation of belief in human beings—even human beings on the bottom of society, like these seven sponge divers who met their death in the wreck in the Ægean. Bates doesn't say everything about these people, but he does stress in each one certain traits, ways of thought and feeling, balked possibilities, that make one realize they had once been worth saving, and could have been saved. "I never intended to say all about these men," he writes in the letter I have been quoting from, "but to loosen the problem, to develop them, rather than to analyze them, to such a point that they would move in the mind of the reader; that the reader should analyze." The nearest approach to an explicit statement of a revolutionary faith in humanity is put into the mouth of the defeated writer, Legge: "I used to feel how miserable human life is. We've come all the way out of the first idiocy or out of matter, out of the depths of the sea if you like, and all we can do is to quarrel and scratch in the dirt . . . sweat grease and drink a bottle empty and light a penny candle against the darkness. . . . Yet I feel we could be *anything* because we have got out of the depths."

There is a kind of belief in humanity that survives only in carefully cultivated remoteness from men. With the first shock of contact, it often lapses into cynical disillusionment. This isn't the kind Ralph Bates has. His is like Maxim Gorki's; it isn't an ivory-tower belief but a front-line-trench belief. When he wrote the letter about *Rainbow Fish,* he was with the International Brigade in Spain, and he concludes: "The stories that will come out of this work will be stories of success." He is now in the United States for the second time within a year, to make clear why he thinks they will be stories of success.

If you listen to him telling an audience about the defense of Madrid and the building-up of a people's army out of an undisciplined, politically divided militia, you will be struck by the skill with which he shapes out of the facts he has gathered a clear-cut interpretation of the Spanish situation, internal and international. He is above all factual and lucid and orderly. But this man in the captain's uniform is still the novelist, who reveals himself in some vivid incident or some sharp picture, lighting up in a flash the Spain he knows from many years of living and working there. It may be a snapshot of a peasant, met in the mountains, who is oddly decorated with a string tied at one end to an

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aching tooth and at the other to his great toe. For so the pain will be persuaded down into the earth. What better proof of the backwardness of an illiterate peasantry? But this same peasant turns out to be something of an advanced thinker about religion and education, so that the authorities in his own village have driven him out. Spain is at once so backward—and so forward. Or here is a front-line incident: a group of peasants driven from their fields by advancing rebel forces are now defending Madrid, but their thoughts are with the grain they know is ripe for cutting just behind the enemy front; and so on successive moonless nights they creep with their scythes through weak places in the enemy lines, cut the wheat, and bring it back to help feed the city. As he tells these and other stories, Bates stands quietly, making few gestures with his short, strong hands, but usually keeping them behind him, with thumbs hooked into his belt; until he reaches a conclusion that calls forth applause and cheers—and then his right hand shoots up in the anti-fascist salute. It is a dramatic period, but he has indulged in no oratory. He has only repeated many times: I want you to see; get this clear.

That Bates should be fighting with Spanish workers and peasants after years of living among them is easy to understand. But one wonders why he went to Spain in the first place. Nobody could look more English. He has the bluest of eyes behind his spectacles, pink cheeks, blond hair, and a sturdy figure. Why Spain? He himself thinks it was partly because of a great-grandfather who sailed in trading vessels between Bristol and Cadiz, and dying in Cadiz, was buried there. A photograph of his grave, along with several pictures of Spanish scenes, hung on the wall of the Bates home and fixed a boy's imagination upon this ancestor lying in Spanish earth. When the war, for which he volunteered at eighteen (he was born in 1899, in Swindon, a small industrial town in Wiltshire), was over and he was demobilized, he went first to Marseilles, where he got a job and lodged with dock-workers, and then he crossed to Barcelona. Working on the docks, he came to know and love the men of his companionship, the rebellious, loyal men, lean with poverty and thought—the "lean men" of his first novel. From 1920 to 1923, undeclared civil war reigned in Barcelona—"and I more than saw it. One never knew when a bullet would get the man by one's side or the man by his." Then he started walking over Spain, doing odd jobs at tinsmithing and olive gathering, studying the songs and musical instruments of the peasantry—he once intended to write a scholarly book about all this, but has now turned his material over to a friend in Cambridge—and taking in with a story-teller's eye those regional diversities of landscape and people out of which he created the beautiful contrasts of *The Olive Field*. A brief return to England made him feel like a Latin in a gray Saxon land, and he was soon back in Barcelona. Spain for him, as he has said, represented both escape and reality.

Much of what happened in the next few years—too much of it, he now thinks—he later built into the story of the Englishman, Charing, leading character in *Lean Men*. There was the little circle of workers and poets, becoming less literary and more political as the Spanish crisis ripened and the dictatorship tottered. There were revolutionary strikes; arms had to be smuggled through the passes of the Pyrenees, men wanted by the police had to be helped to escape into France. It is all in *Lean Men,* along with an unforgettable feeling of the city itself—Barcelona, that volcano eternally rumbling, "upon which the order of Spanish society is built." Bates poured into the novel, as if he would never write another, all his amazingly diverse interests—in music, folk poetry, labor revolt, arts and crafts, religious speculation, mountain climbing, love, politics. Many of these interests come through confusedly but excitingly; a few achieve fine expression. Among the readers excited by the novel with its promise of richer achievement to come was Edward Garnett. And to his help and interest Bates ascribes the advance in technical mastery shown in *The Olive Field*. This association with Garnett, and other fruitful relationships with writers like Ralph Fox and Wyndham Lewis, developed during the interval when he was in England, after the declaration of the republic in Madrid in 1931. He was in and out of jobs, and when out, devoted himself to writing.

Bates is quite as interesting when he talks about special problems of the writer's craft as when his theme is the defense of Madrid. One of these problems is an old one, about which, he says, he once had a dog fight with Wyndham Lewis: whether to write behavioristically, or to get inside the characters and feel them. He sees a dreadful warning in the fact that Wyndham Lewis, arch-apostle of exteriorism in England, has become an enthusiastic disciple of Hitler. Bates thinks that the reportage or behavioristic school leaves out the fact of development in a man, the fact of a time-lag, as well as of jump and anticipation. "We must humanize, personalize, if we are to be really revolutionary." Having often been told by critics to "write more dialectically," he has tried to do this, "despite almost complete ignorance as to what that means in novel-writing." He is aware now of "dialectical" failures in his earlier work: "that in *Lean Men* the dockers and longshoremen who stand for the working class do not come into sufficient contact with the middle-class master blacksmith weakens the novel." He pointed out to me a small but significant instance in *The Olive Field* of his effort to write dialectically—in terms of the novel. There is a scene where Mudarra, olive worker, guitarist, and anarchist, arrested after a riot in the olive groves of Don Fadrique, is tortured with thorns thrust under his nails, and other such discouragements of activity against the old feudal order.

The scene closes, and with a sharp transition we find ourselves with Don Fadrique in his study, where in poring over one of the precious old music books that are his passion, he escapes from responsibility for what is done in his name. The book has a quaint frontispiece of a dolphin bearing on his back through tranquil seas a rapt musician. The description of this frontispiece, mingled with Don Fadrique's musings upon it, repeats with subtle variations the imagery of the preceding scene—as in "thorn-shaped" waves, for instance. And this play of imagery suggests the synthesis that will develop out of opposing movements: toward the future in the revolutionist, toward the past

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in the aristocrat. Music serves them both: a scholar's escape for the marquis, a living and growing tradition for the revolutionist.

"Writing is part of a man's living, and literature is part of a lived life." This is what Ralph Bates believes, and in practicing his belief, he offers us the exciting spectacle—not the only one in these days—of the integrated activity of man and artist.

NIKOLAI OSTROVSKI: A HERO OF THE SOCIALIST EPOCH

By Joshua Kunitz

WHEN on December 23, 1936, the Soviet papers, in heavy black borders, announced the death of the blind and totally paralyzed young writer, Nikolai Ostrovski, a great wail of lamentation rose over the land. There was not a person that one met, not a house that one entered, but that the death of Ostrovski immediately became the topic of sorrowful conversation. Within three days about one-quarter of a million Muscovites filed past his inconceivably shriveled body which lay amidst mountains of red and white flowers in the Writers' Club. Huge shivering throngs stood patiently for hours, waiting to bid the last farewell to their beloved comrade and writer. It is no exaggeration to say that, though only thirty-two years old and the author of only one brief autobiographical novel (the first part of his second novel has been published posthumously), Ostrovski had by his extraordinary life and work and the Bolshevik types he created captured the imagination and stirred the moral fervor of his Soviet contemporaries.

As I stood in the guard of honor watching the intense faces of the young people who passed the bier, I felt that to them Nikolai Ostrovski was dear because in his optimism, his energy, his faith in mankind, his ability to surmount almost superhuman difficulties and to draw strength, and, despite his terrible afflictions, even creative joy from active identification with the life of his socialist fatherland and the working-class struggles throughout the world, he was the perfect expression of their own most exalted, most Communist selves.

Every society, every age, every class has its own dominant ideal of the good life and its own characteristic hero in whose real or imaginary conduct that ideal is most luminously expressed. There were the Spartan ideal and hero, and the Athenian, the Christian and the pagan, the feudal and the bourgeois. All these various ideals and heroes were reflected in the arts and literatures of the respective societies, epochs, and classes. The Russian hero throughout the whole of the nineteenth and the beginning of this century was a pale, vacillating, self-centered, and self-tormenting Hamlet. The Russian hero was passive; his attitude to the surrounding life negative. This hero was carried over into the literature of the early years of the revolution when the great majority of Soviet writers were still of the bourgeois intelligentsia and when the need for a resolute choice between the two warring worlds further intensified their psychological tortures. The real protagonist of the new era was, of course, the worker. But before he would potently assert himself in literature both as creator and hero, a considerable time would elapse. Meanwhile life was thundering forward through civil war, the N.E.P., industrialization, and collectivization, straight into socialism.

The writers of the generation before Ostrovski's, those who had once specialized in delving into their Hamlet complexes, now found it almost impossible to adapt their perceptive apparatus, their lexicon, their technique to life's new content. Soviet reality was too fluid, changing, variegated, elusive. Life and people were going through breath-taking transformations. Love, friendship, loyalty, ambition, patriotism, the relation of the individual to society, the universe, and death had to be reëxamined from an entirely new angle. Here and there, in an individual act, a fugitive word, a meteoric flash, a suggestive detail, one caught a glimpse of what the socialist ideal of the good life would finally be; but when Soviet literature first endeavored to capture those inchoate suggestions and flashes and embody them in what would universally be recognized as *the* hero of the socialist epoch, the result was usually a thesis, a *schema,* not a being of flesh and blood. To create the socialist hero, to grasp the new, the distinctive, the quintessential in him, to crystallize in poetic image what was already present but still uncrystallized in the seething stream of life—that was a task, the Herculean dimensions of which confounded the most gifted of the older writers. One thing was clear. It was the new socialist humanity, the workers, the udarniks, the Bolsheviks, the builders of the new life, who would have to speak for themselves, realize themselves in their own art, crystallize their own ideals and heroes in their own creative work. And it is in the light of this historically dictated development that the life and work and influence of Nikolai Ostrovski in Soviet literature assume such significance.

Nikolai Ostrovski's life, as he himself and others have recorded it, unfolds before me. I see the little Ukrainian town of Shepetovka, the tiny gray house by the dusty road, where in 1904 Nikolai was born. The stately mansion of his rich neighbors is hidden behind the thick foliage of a magnificent garden. I hear the mingled talk in Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, and Yiddish. Nikolai's father dies when Nikolai is still a baby. His mother is working. His older brother Artem is also working—a mechanic in the railroad depot. Nikolai is left to himself. He runs about the street unwashed and unkempt. He plays games, he fishes, he swims, he gets into scrapes, he develops a strong, lithe body and a nimble, inquiring mind. In the parochial school he is

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a nuisance with his eternal questions. The priest finally chases him out, and that is the end of his schooling. At eleven he becomes a dishwasher at the railroad station. He is beaten by the proprietor and kicked by the customers. Brutality, injustice, exploitation, prostitution, robbing of drunken patrons—the impressionable youngster sees much and learns much on his job. He seeks escape in reading. The life of Garibaldi and Voynich's famous novel *The Gadfly* stir him to the depths of his soul. Though he is not yet fully conscious of it, he becomes a rebel, a bitter foe of all exploitation and oppression of man by man. He has a fight with his boss and, to the dismay of his poor mother, is thrown out of his job. He then becomes an apprentice in the railroad depot. He is bright, he learns quickly. But before long the waves of the revolution strike Shepetovka. Following his proletarian intuition, he chooses the right side. At the age of fifteen, he is already in the Young Communist League. He joins the Reds in the civil war, first the army of Kotovski, later the cavalry of Budyonni.

Bold, courageous, enterprising, he is always in the front ranks. He is seriously wounded in the head, and lies unconscious for weeks. But from this first encounter with death he rises victorious to join the fighting ranks again. When the revolution finally triumphs, Nikolai is demobilized, goes back to the railway depot. But he does not stay there long. His life becomes one endless series of fulfilling difficult party tasks. He is always among the first and the best. If it is on a railway-building job in a swampy region, Nikolai is right on the spot. If it is to guard the border at one of the most dangerous sectors, Nikolai is right there. If it is the secretaryship of the regional committee of the Young Communist League, Nikolai takes the job.

Years at the front and the wound in the head have undermined his health. A grave case of typhus contracted on his railway-building job adds the finishing touches. His health is ruined, yet he clings to his party work. By 1927 paralysis sets in. He now lies flat on his back, he can move only the fingers of one hand. But he does not yield. He continues his party work, conducting Marxist study circles in his home, teaching the younger members of the party.

Then another terrible blow: he goes totally blind. He cannot conduct the study circles any longer. Absolutely immobile and sightless and with almost every organ of his body, except the brain and the voice, in a state of rapid disintegration, Nikolai Ostrovski nevertheless refuses to surrender. True, the idea of suicide occurs to him, but he rejects it immediately as unworthy of a Bolshevik. "Even when life becomes intolerable," says the hero in his novel, "a Bolshevik must know how to make it useful." Ostrovski reports to the party: "Physically I have lost almost everything. What is left is the inextinguishable energy of youth and a passionate determination in some way to be useful to my party and my class."

And so, this blind and paralyzed and hopelessly emaciated being, all skin and bones now—a thinking mummy—sets out on a new career. He becomes an author. He dictates his autobiographical novel *How Steel Was Tempered.* When the novel is completed, he sends his only copy to the publishers, but it is lost in the mails. Undaunted, he starts dictating all over again. In 1932 the first part of his novel is published. It is a simple, straightforward, vigorous, fresh, optimistic, young, fervently proletarian story. It is a success. Children and old people, the cultured and uncultured read it with equal absorption. Like Chapayev, Pavel Korchagin, the hero of Ostrovski's novel, becomes one of the most beloved characters in Soviet literature. The name of Korchagin-Ostrovski, the young Communist hero of the civil war who lost his health, his sight, his limbs in the struggle for the establishment of the Soviet power, but who instead of being crushed is kept alive by an incandescent will to labor and create for the glory of socialism, is on everyone's tongue. Admirers make pilgrimages from all over the country. The Communist Party and the Soviet government surround him with every possible comfort and care. On October 1, 1935, the highest honor in the land is bestowed upon him, and Petrovski, the aged president of the Ukrainian republic, travels all the way to the Crimea personally to pin the Order of Lenin on Ostrovski's chest.

Ostrovski is tremendously moved and grateful. "As long as my heart still beats," he writes on that occasion, "my whole life, to its very last throb, will be dedicated to the training of the young people of our socialist fatherland in the spirit of Bolshevism." He has only one poignant regret: "It pains me to think that in the forthcoming final struggle with fascism I won't be able to take my place at the battle front. A cruel affliction has nailed me down." But it is not in Ostrovski's character to waste time in futile regrets. He'll do his Bolshevik part anyhow. "With so much greater passion," he vows, "will I smite the enemy with the other weapon with which the party of Lenin and Stalin has armed me. . . ."

During the months that follow, despite his rapidly failing health, Ostrovski displays incredible energy and enthusiasm. He knows that he has not very long to go, but plans of large works stir in his head. He is determined to go on, to be useful, to contribute his share to socialist construction. He dictates, dictates, dictates, welcoming insomnia, for it allows more time to work. It takes three stenographers to keep up with him. He suffers excruciating pains. He faints. But every time he comes to, his first words are, "Forward, friends, forward—the manuscript must be handed in as per plan!" He fulfills the plan four days ahead of time and he is jubilant: "I, too, am a Stakhanovite!"

He deliberately and tenaciously fights death. "I'll show the old witch yet how Bolsheviks die," he jests. Only a couple of months before the end, he remarks to a group of friends: "If you are told that I am dead, don't believe it until you come here and actually convince yourselves. But if I am really vanquished, no one will dare say 'he might have lived yet.' I will leave only after I am absolutely licked. While even one cell in my body remains alive, capable of resisting, I will be alive, resisting."

He loves life, and he keenly responds to everything about him, especially to political events. He has the papers read to him every morning. He also follows the news on the radio. Spain pervades his being. To the very end, his first question in the morning is, "How about Madrid, does it still hold out?" And when told

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that it still holds out, his invariable cheerful comment is, "Fine fellows! That means that I too must hold out!" Every time he dozes off, he dreams of Spain. And when he wakes with a start, he tells how he and the Spanish comrades had captured a fascist cruiser and what they had done to the fascist officers. Or he tells how, as a soldier in the republican army, he made his way through all kinds of dangers into the fascist camp and killed General Franco. What jubilation there was in Spain and throughout the rest of the proletarian world! The dream of world revolution is his dearest and most cherished dream. "The universal triumph of our cause, that is what we want!" he concludes the recital of his adventures in Spain.

His last great joy is hearing over the radio Stalin's report to the Eighth Extraordinary Congress of Soviets on the new constitution. His last great sorrow comes from the news that André Gide, the very same Gide who had wept over him and kissed his hands, has written a slanderous book about the Soviet Union.

His letter to his mother, written about a week before his death, reveals Ostrovski's Bolshevik character better than anything one can tell about him:

Dear Little Mother: Today I have completed all the work on the first volume of *Born in the Storm*. I have kept my word to the Central Committee of the Komsomol that the book would be finished by the fifteenth of December.

This whole month I worked "in three shifts." I sweated my secretaries to the limit, robbing them of their rest day, making them work from early morning till late into the night. Poor girls! I don't know what they think of me, but I treated them abominably.

Now it is all in the past. I am immeasurably tired. But the book is finished and in three weeks it will come out in the *Roman-Gazetta* in an edition of one hundred and fifty thousand, then in several other editions—altogether about a half a million.

. . . You must have heard about André Gide's treachery. How he deceived our hearts then! And who, mother, could have imagined that he would behave so vilely, so dishonorably! This old man should be ashamed of his action. He has deceived not only us, but our whole great people. Now his book *Return from the U.S.S.R.* is being made use of by our enemies in their struggle against socialism and against the working class. About me André Gide wrote "well." He says that if I lived in Europe, they would regard me as a "saint" there, and so on and so forth. But I won't speak of him any more. His treachery was a terribly heavy blow to me, for I had honestly believed his words and his tears and his solemn praise, while he was here, of our achievements and victories.

Now I will rest a whole month. I will work very little. That is, of course, if I will be able to stand idleness. Our characters, mother, as you know, are exactly alike. Still, I will rest. I will read, listen to music, and sleep more—six hours is really not enough.

Did you hear Comrade Stalin's speech? Write whether our radio is working.

Forgive me, my own, for not having written to you all these weeks. I never have you out of my mind. Take care of yourself and be cheerful. The winter months will pass soon and with the spring I'll be coming back to you. I firmly press your hands, your honest worker hands, and tenderly embrace you . . .

Such was Nikolai Ostrovski. Toward the end he was almost bodiless—sheer energy—a mind decarnate yet mundane, incorporeal yet earthly. He was, as it were, the spiritual extract of the period, the party, and the class to which he belonged. Through him, on a hitherto unattained plane, the two central problems of man's existence—his relation to society and his relation to death—found their exquisite socialist solution.

As I stood in the guard of honor by his side, peering into the eyes of the young people that filed past, it suddenly occurred to me that I was present at one of those rare and mysterious moments when, on the basis of sublime and emotionally charged fact, a great but until now latent ideal was being socially crystallized. For here, to use André Gide's characterization, lay a saint, in the deepest and fullest sense a Communist hero-saint—a pure and glowing symbol of an ideal of life inconceivable in any but a socialist society.

A Summer Night

The wind wheels over Manhattan like an enemy
storming, and we wake before dawn in the midst of bombardment,
turning our heads from the beams of lightning, searchlight of death.

Then like newsreel on the flashing wall, from Shanghai
floating in conquered creek toward the dark ceiling, the eyes
of uniformed soldiers, puffed with decay, the shocking smile.

Long rains of childhood return in the hush of rain,
and the morning twenty years gone, the shouts in the wet doorway:
War At Last and our men over cloudy ocean marching in parade.

Wavering years: the mind burning and our hands unsatisfied ever:
gripping from job to job, in escape or search;
the children grown out of war and restless to return.

Helmet and muddy cheek, the grenade poised to throw,
natural we'll stand at last, watching in the man-deep furrow,
the explosive fountains, the shrapnel flowers with instantaneous growth;

The hateful stance, the habit of bayonets, the doomed
gasping in deadly landscape, and the imagined wound
darkening the sheets while the pulse of guns still thunders in the shallow room.

You gave no choice, Oh shouting rulers, so we learned none.
brave by routine, we'll come to pollute your brilliant guns,
your stadia, and your microphones—with your blood.

David Wolff.

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The Company

By Thomas Wolfe

WHEN Joe went home that year he found that Mr. Merrit also was in town. Almost before the first greetings at the station were over, Jim told him. The two brothers stood there grinning at each other. Jim, with his lean, thin, deeply furrowed face, that somehow always reminded Joe so curiously and so poignantly of Lincoln, and that also somehow made him feel a bit ashamed, looked older and more worn than he had the last time Joe had seen him. He always looked a little older and a little more worn; the years like the slow gray ash of time wore at his temples and the corners of his eyes. His hair, already sparse, had thinned back and receded from his temples and there were little webbings of fine wrinkles at the corners of his eyes. The two brothers stood there looking at each other, grinning, a little awkward, but delighted. In Jim's naked worn eyes Joe could see how proud the older brother was of him, and something caught him in the throat.

But Jim just grinned at him, and in a moment said: "I guess we'll have to sleep you out in the garage. Bob Merrit is in town, you, you—or if you like, there's a nice room at Mrs. Parker's right across the street, and she'd be glad to have you."

Joe looked rather uncomfortable at the mention of Mrs. Parker's name. She was a worthy lady, but of a literary turn of mind, and a pillar of the Woman's Club. Kate saw his expression and laughed, poking him in the ribs with her big finger: "Ho, ho, ho, ho, ho! You see what you're in for, don't you? The prodigal son comes home and we give him his choice of Mrs. Parker or the garage! Now is that life, or not?"

Jim Doaks, as was his wont, took this observation in very slowly. One could see him deliberating on it, and then as it broke slowly on him, it sort of spread all over his seamed face; he bared his teeth in a craggy grin; a kind of rusty and almost unwilling chuckle came from him; he turned his head sideways, and said "Hi—I," an expletive that with him was always indicative of mirth.

"I don't mind a bit," protested Joe. "I think the garage is swell. And then"—they all grinned at each other again with the affection of people who know each other so well that they are long past knowledge—"if I get to helling around at night, I won't feel that I am disturbing you when I come in. . . . And how is Mr. Merrit, anyway?"

"Why, just fine," Jim answered with that air of thoughtful deliberation which accompanied most of his remarks. "He's just fine, I think. And he's been asking about you," said Jim seriously. "He wants to see you."

"And we knew you wouldn't mind," Kate said more seriously. "You know, it's business; he's with the Company, and of course it's good policy to be as nice to them as you can."

But in a moment, because such designing was really alien to her own hospitable and wholehearted spirit, she added: "Mr. Merrit is a nice fellow. I like him. We're glad to have him anyway."

"Bob's all right," said Jim. "And I know he wants to see you. Well," he said, "if we're all ready, let's get going. I'm due back at the office now. Merrit's coming in. If you'd like to fool around uptown until one o'clock and see your friends, you could come by then, and I'll run you out. Why don't you do that? Merrit's coming out to dinner, too."

It was agreed to do this, and a few minutes later Joe got out of the car upon the Public Square of the town that he had not seen for a year.

THE TRUTH of the matter was that Joe not only felt perfectly content at the prospect of sleeping in the garage, but he also felt a pleasant glow at the knowledge that Mr. Robert Merrit was in town, and staying at his brother's house.

Joe had never known exactly just what Mr. Robert Merrit did. In Jim's spacious but rather indefinite phrase, he was referred to as "the Company's man." And Joe did not know exactly what the duties of a "Company's man" were, but Mr. Merrit made them seem mighty pleasant. He turned up ruddy, plump, well-kept, full of jokes, and immensely agreeable, every two or three months, with a pocket that seemed perpetually full, and like the Jovian pitcher of milk of Baucis and Philemon, perpetually replenished, in some miraculous way, with big fat savory cigars, which he was always handing out to people.

Joe understood, of course, that there was some business connection in the mysterious ramifications of "the Company" between his brother Jim and Robert Merrit. But he had never heard them "talk business" together, nor did he know just what the business was. Mr. Merrit would "turn up" every two or three months like a benevolent and ruddy Santa Claus, making his jolly little jokes, passing out his fat cigars, putting his arm around people's shoulders—in general, making everyone feel good. In his own words, "I've got to turn up now and then just to see that the boys are behaving themselves, and not taking any wooden nickels." Here he would wink at you in such an infectious way that you had to grin. Then he would give you a fat cigar.

His functions did seem to be ambassadorial. Really, save for an occasional visit to the office, he seemed to spend a good deal of his time in inaugurating an era of good living every time he came to town. He was always taking the salesmen out to dinner and to lunch. He was always "coming out to the house," and when

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he did come, one knew that Kate would have one of her best meals ready, and that there would be some good drinks. Mr. Merrit usually brought the drinks. Every time he came to town he always seemed to bring along with him a plentiful stock of high-grade beverages. In other words, the man really did carry about with him an aura of good fellowship and good living, and that was why it was so pleasant now to know that Mr. Merrit was in town and "staying out at the house."

Mr. Merrit was not only a nice fellow. He was also with "the Company." And, since Jim was also a member of "the Company," that made everything all right. Because "the Company," Joe knew, was somehow a vital, mysterious form in all their lives. Jim had begun to work for it when he was sixteen years old—as a machinist's helper in the shops at Akron. Since then he had steadily worked his way up through all the states until now, "well-fixed" apparently, he was a district manager—an important member of "the sales organization."

"The Company," "the sales organization"—mysterious titles, both of them. But most comforting.

II

THE sales organization—or, to use a word that at this time was coming into common speech, the functional operation—of the Federal Weight, Scale & Computing Co., while imposing in its ramified complexity of amount and number, was in its essence so beautifully simple that to a future age, at least, the system of enfeoffments in the Middle Ages, the relation between the liege lord and his serf, may well seem complex by comparison.

The organization of the sales system was briefly just this, and nothing more: the entire country was divided into districts and over each district an agent was appointed. This agent, in turn, employed salesmen to cover the various portions of his district. In addition to these salesmen there was also an "office man" whose function, as his name implies, was to look after the office, attend to any business that might come up when the agent and his salesmen were away, take care of any spare sheep who might stray in of their own volition without having been enticed thither by the persuasive herdings of the salesmen and their hypnotic words; and a "repair man" whose business it was to repair damaged or broken-down machines.

Although in the familiar conversation of the agents, a fellow agent was said to be the agent for a certain town—Smith, for example, was "the Knoxville man," Jones, the Charleston one, Robinson, the one at Richmond, etc., these agencies, signified by the name of the town in which the agent had his office, comprised the district that surrounded them.

In Catawba there were six agencies and six agents. The population of the state was about three million. In other words, each agent had a district of approximately one-half million people. Not that the distribution worked out invariably in this way. There was no set rule for the limitation of an agency, some agencies were larger than others and considerably more profitable, depending upon the amount of business and commercial enterprise that was done in any given district. But the median of one agent to a half-million people was, in probability, a fairly accurate one for the whole country.

Now, as to the higher purposes of this great institution, which the agent almost never referred to by name, as who should not speak of the deity with coarse directness, but almost always with a just perceptible lowering and huskiness of the voice, as "the Company"—these higher purposes were also, when seen in their essential purity, characterized by the same noble directness and simplicity as marked the operations of the entire enterprise. This higher purpose, in the famous utterance of the great man himself, invariably repeated every year as a sort of climax or peroration to his hour-long harangue to his adoring disciples at the national convention, was—sweeping his arm in a gesture of magnificent and grandiloquent command toward the map of the entire United States of America—"There is your market. Go out and sell them."

What could be simpler or more beautiful than this? What could be more eloquently indicative of that quality of noble directness, mighty sweep, and far-seeing imagination, which has been celebrated in the annals of modern literature under the name of "vision"? "There is your market. Go out and sell them."

Who says the age of romance is dead? Who says there are no longer giants on the earth in these days? It is Napoleon speaking to his troops before the pyramids. "Soldiers, forty centuries are looking down on you." It is John Paul Jones: "We have met the enemy and they are ours." It is Dewey, on the bridge deck of the *Oregon*: "You may fire when you are ready, Gridley." It is General Grant before the works of Petersburg: "I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer."

"There's your market. Go out and sell them." The words had the same spacious sweep and noble simplicity that have always characterized the utterances of the great leaders at every age and epoch of man's history.

It is true that there had been a time when the aims and aspirations of "the Company" had been more modest ones. There had been a time when the founder of the institution, the father of the present governor, John S. Appleton, had confined his ambitions to these modest words: "I should like to see one of my machines in every store, shop, or business in the United States that needs one, and that can afford to pay for one."

The high aims expressed in these splendid words would seem to the inexperienced observer to be far-reaching enough, but as any agent upon the company's roster could now tell you, they were so conventional in their modest pretentions as to be practically mid-Victorian. Or, as the agent himself might put it: "That's old stuff now—we've gone way beyond that. Why, if you wanted to sell a machine to someone who *needs* one, you'd get nowhere. Don't wait until he *needs* one—make him buy one now. Suppose he doesn't need one; all right, we'll make him see the need of one. If he has no need of one, why we'll create the need." In a more technical phrase, this was known as "creat-

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ing the market," and this beautiful and poetic invention was the inspired work of one man, the fruit of the vision of none other than the great John S. Appleton, Jr., himself.

In fact, in one impassioned flight of oratory before his assembled parliaments, John S. Appleton, Jr., had become so intoxicated with the grandeur of his own vision that he is said to have paused, gazed dreamily into unknown vistas of magic Canaan, and suddenly to have given utterance in a voice quivering with surcharged emotion to these words: "My friends, the possibilities of the market, now that we have created it, are practically unlimited." Here he was silent for a moment, and those who were present on that historic occasion say that for a moment the great man paled, and then he seemed to stagger as the full impact of his vision smote him with its vistas. His voice is said to have trembled so when he tried to speak that for a moment he could not control himself. It is said that when he uttered those memorable words, which from that moment on were engraved upon the hearts of every agent there, his voice faltered, sunk to an almost inaudible whisper, as if he himself could hardly comprehend the magnitude of his own conception.

"My friends," he muttered thickly, and was seen to reel and clutch the rostrum for support, "my friends, seen properly . . ." he whispered and moistened his dry lips, but here, those who are present say, his voice grew stronger and the clarion words blared forth " . . . seen properly, with the market we have created, there is no reason why one of our machines should not be in the possession of every man, woman, and child in the United States of America."

Then came the grand, familiar gesture to the great map of these assembled states: "There's your market, boys. Go out and sell them."

Such, then, were the sky-soaring aims and aspirations of the Federal Weight, Scale & Computing Co. in the third decade of the century, and such, reduced to its naked and essential simplicity, was the practical effort, the concrete purpose of every agent in the company. Gone were the days forever, as they thought, when their operations must be confined and limited merely to those business enterprises who needed, or thought they needed, a weight scale or computing machine. The sky was the limit, and for any agent to have even hinted that anything less or lower than the sky was possibly the limit, would have been an act of such impious sacrilege as to have merited his instant expulsion from the true church and the living faith—the church and faith of John S. Appleton, Jr., which was called "the Company."

In the pursuit and furtherance and consummation of this grand and elemental aim, the organization of the company worked with the naked drive, the beautiful precision of a locomotive piston. Over the salesmen was the agent, and over the agent was the district supervisor, and over the district supervisor was the district manager, and over the district manager was the general manager, and over the general manager was . . . was . . . God himself, or, as the agents more properly referred to him, in voices that fell naturally to the hush of reverence, "the Old Man."

The operation of this beautiful a[n] owerful machine can perhaps best be described to [a] lay reader by a series of concrete and poetic ima[ges]. Those readers, for example, with an interest in [pa]inting, who are familiar with some of the terrific d[e]s of old Pieter Breughel, may recall a certain gig[antic] product of his genius which bears the title *The Big [Ones] Eating Up the Little Ones,* and which portrays jus[t]. The great whales and monster leviathans of the vasty deep swallowing the sharks, the sharks swallowing the swordfish, the swordfish swallowing the great bass, the great bass swallowing the lesser mackerel, the lesser mackerel eating up the herrings, the herrings gulping down the minnows, and so on down the whole swarming and fantastic world that throngs the sea-floors of the earth, until you get down to the tadpoles, who, it is to be feared, have nothing smaller than themselves to swallow.

Or, to a reader interested in history, the following illustration may make the operation of the system plain. At the end of a long line that stretches from the pyramids until the very portals of his house, the great Pharaoh, with a thonged whip in his hands, which he vigorously and unmercifully applies to the bare back and shoulders of the man ahead of him, who is great Pharaoh's great chief overseer, and in the hand of Pharaoh's great chief overseer likewise a whip of many tails which the great chief overseer unstintedly applies to the quivering back and shoulders of the wretch before him, who is the great chief overseer's chief lieutenant, and in the lieutenant's hand a whip of many tails which he applies to the suffering hide of his head sergeant, and in the head sergeant's hand a wicked flail with which he belabors the pelt of a whole company of groaning corporals, and in the hands of every groaning corporal, a wicked whip with which they lash and whack the bodies of a whole regiment of grunting slaves, who toil and sweat and bear burdens and pull and haul and build the towering structure of the pyramid.

Or, finally, for those readers with an interest in simple mechanics, the following illustration may suffice. Conceive an enormous flight of stairs with many landings, and at the very top of it, supreme and masterful, a man, who kicks another man in front of him quite solemnly in the seat of the pants, this man turns a somersault and comes erect upon the first and nearest landing and immediately, and with great decision, kicks the man in front of him down two more landings of these enormous stairs, who, on arriving, kicks the next incumbent down three landing flights, and so on to the bottom, where there is no one left to kick.

Now these, in their various ways, and by the tokens of their various imagery, fairly describe the simple but effective operations of the Company. Four times a year, at the beginning of each quarter, John S. Appleton called his general manager before him and kicked him down one flight of stairs, saying, "You're not getting the business. The market is there. You know what you can do about it—or else. . . ."

And the general manager repeated the master's words and operations on his chief assistant managers, and they

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in turn upon the district managers, and they in turn upon the district supervisors, and they in turn upon the district agents, and they in turn upon the lowly salesmen, and they in turn, at long and final last, upon the final recipient of all swift kicks—the general public, the amalgamated Doakses of the earth.

It is true that to the lay observer the operation did not appear so brutally severe as has been described. It is true that the iron hand was cunningly concealed in the velvet glove, but there was no mistaking the fact, as those who had once felt its brutal grip could testify, that the iron hand was there and could be put to ruthless use at any moment. It is true that the constant menace of that iron hand was craftily disguised by words of cheer, by talk of fair rewards and bonuses, but these plums of service could turn bitter in the mouth, the plums themselves were just a threat of stern reprisal to those who were not strong or tall enough to seize them. One was not given his choice of having plums or of not having plums. It is no exaggeration to say that one was told he must have plums, that he must get plums, that if he failed to gather plums another picker would be put into his place.

And of all the many wonderful and beautiful inventions which the great brain of Mr. John S. Appleton had created and conceived, this noble invention of plum-picking was the simplest and most cunning of the lot. For be it understood that these emoluments of luscious fruit were not wholly free. For every plum the picker took unto himself, two more were added to the plenteous store of Mr. Appleton. And the way this agricultural triumph was achieved was as follows:

Mr. Appleton was the founder of a great social organization known as the Hundred Club. The membership of the Hundred Club was limited exclusively to Mr. Appleton himself and the agents, salesmen, and district managers of his vast organization. The advantages of belonging to the Hundred Club were quickly apparent to everyone. Although it was asserted that membership in the Hundred Club was not compulsory, if one did not belong to it the time was not far distant when one would not belong to Mr. Appleton. The club, therefore, like all the nobler Appleton inventions, was contrived cunningly of the familiar ingredients of simplicity and devilish craft, of free will and predestination.

The club had the extraordinary distinction of compelling people to join it while at the same time giving them, through its membership, the proud prestige of social distinction. Not to belong to the Hundred Club, for an agent or a salesman, was equivalent to living on the other side of the railroad tracks. If one did not get in, if one could not reach high enough to make it, he faded quickly from the picture, his fellows spoke of him infrequently. When someone said, "What's Bob Klutz doing now?" the answers would be sparse and definitely vague, and, in course of time, Bob Klutz would be spoken of no more. He would fade out in oblivion. He was "no longer with the Company."

Now, the purpose and the meaning of the Hundred Club was this. Each agent and each salesman in the company, of no matter what position or what rank, had what was called a "quota"—that is to say, a certain fixed amount of business which was established as the normal average of his district and capacity. A man's quota differed according to the size of his territory, its wealth, its business, and his own experience and potentiality. If he was a district agent, his personal quota would be higher than that of a mere salesman in a district. One man's quota would be sixty, another's eighty, another's ninety or one hundred. Each of these men, however, no matter how small or large his quota might be, was eligible for membership in the Hundred Club, provided he could average 100 percent of his quota—hence the name. If he averaged more, if he got 120 percent of his quota, or 150 percent, or 200 percent, there were appropriate honors and rewards, not only of a social but of a financial nature. One could be high up in the Hundred Club or low down in the Hundred Club: it had almost as many degrees of honor and of merit as the great Masonic order. But of one thing, one could be certain: one must belong to the Hundred Club if one wanted to continue to belong to "the Company."

The unit of the quota system was "the point." If a salesman or an agent stated that his personal quota was eighty, it was understood that his quota was eighty points a month, that this was the desired goal, the average, toward which he should strive, which he should not fall below, and which, if possible, he should try to better. If a salesman's quota was eighty points a month, and he averaged eighty points a month throughout the year, he became automatically a member of the Hundred Club. And if he surpassed this quota, he received distinction, promotion, and reward in the Hundred Club, in proportion to the degree of his increase. The unit of the point itself was fixed at forty dollars. Therefore, if a salesman's quota was eighty points a month and he achieved it, he must sell the products of the Federal Weight, Scale & Computing Co. to the amount of more than three thousand dollars every month, and almost forty thousand dollars in the year.

The rewards were high. A salesman's commission averaged from 15 to 20 percent of his total sales; an agent's, from 20 to 25 percent, in addition to the bonuses he could earn by achieving or surpassing his full quota. Thus, it was entirely possible for an ordinary salesman in an average district to earn from six to eight thousand dollars a year, and for an agent to earn from twelve to fifteen thousand dollars, and even more if his district was an exceptionally good one.

So far, so good. The rewards, it is now apparent, were high, the inducements great. Where does the iron hand come in? It came in in many devious and subtle ways, of which the principal and most direct was this: once a man's quota had been fixed at any given point, the Company did not reduce it. On the contrary, if a salesman's quota was eighty points in any given year and he achieved it, he must be prepared at the beginning of the new year to find that his quota had been increased to ninety points. In other words, the plums were there, but always, year by year, upon a somewhat higher bough. "June Was the Greatest Month

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in Federal History"—so read the gigantic posters which the Company was constantly sending out to all its district offices—"*Make July a Greater One!* The Market's There, Mr. Agent, the Rest Is Up to You," etc.

In other words, this practice as applied to salesmanship resembled closely the one that has since been known in the cotton mills as the stretch-out system. June was the greatest month in federal history, but July must be a bigger one, and one must never look back on forgotten Junes with satisfaction. One must go on and upward constantly, the race was to the swift. The pace was ever faster and the road more steep.

The result of this on plain humanity may be inferred. It was shocking and revolting. If the spectacle of the average federal man at work was an alarming one, the spectacle of that same man at play was simply tragic. No more devastating comment could be made on the merits of that vaunted system, which indeed in its essence was the vaunted system at that time of all business, of all America, than the astounding picture of the assembled cohorts of the Hundred Club gathered together in their yearly congress for a "Week of Play." For, be it known, one of the chief rewards of membership in this distinguished body, in addition to the bonuses and social distinctions, was a kind of grandiose yearly outing which lasted for a week and which was conducted "at the Company's expense." These yearly excursions of the fortunate group took various forms, but they were conducted on a lavish scale. The meeting place would be in New York, or in Philadelphia, or in Washington; sometimes the pleasure trip was to Bermuda, sometimes to Havana, sometimes across the continent to California and back again, sometimes to Florida, to the tropic opulence of Miami and Palm Beach; but wherever the voyage led, whatever the scheme might be, it was always grandiose, no expense was spared, everything was done on the grand scale, and the Company—the immortal Company, the paternal, noble, and great-hearted Company—"paid for everything."

If the journey was to be by sea, to Bermuda or to Cuba's shores, the Company chartered a transatlantic liner—one of the smaller but luxurious twenty-thousand tonners of the Cunard, the German Lloyd, or the Holland-American lines. From this time on, the Hundred Club was given a free sweep. The ship was theirs and all the minions of the ship were theirs, to do their bidding. All the liquor in the world was theirs, if they could drink it. And Bermuda's coral isles, the most unlicensed privilege of gay Havana. For one short week, for one brief gaudy week of riot, everything on earth was theirs that money could buy or that the Company could command. It was theirs for the asking—and the Company paid for all.

It was, as we have said, a tragic spectacle: the spectacle of twelve or fifteen hundred men, for on these pilgrimages, by general consent, women—or their wives at any rate—were disbarred—the spectacle of twelve or fifteen hundred men, Americans, of middle years, in the third decade of this century, exhausted, overwrought, their nerves frayed down and stretched to breaking point, met from all quarters of the continent "at the Company's expense" upon a greyhound of the sea for one wild week of pleasure. That spectacle had in its essential elements connotations of such general and tragic force in its relation and its reference to the entire scheme of things and the plan of life that had produced it that a thoughtful Martian, had he been vouchsafed but thirty minutes on this earth and could he have spent those thirty minutes on one of the crack liners that bore the Hundred Club to tropic shores, might have formed conclusions about the life of this tormented little cinder where we live that would have made him sorrowful that he had ever come and eager for the moment when his thirty-minute sojourn would be ended.

III

IT was a few minutes before one o'clock when Joe entered his brother's office. The outer sales room, with its glittering stock of weights, scales, and computing machines, imposingly arranged on walnut pedestals, was deserted. From the little partitioned space behind, which served Jim as an office, he heard the sound of voices.

He recognized Jim's voice—low, grave, and hesitant, deeply troubled—at once. The other voice he had never heard before.

But as he heard that voice, he began to tremble and grow white about the lips. For that voice was a foul insult to human life, an ugly sneer whipped across the face of decent humanity, and as it came to him that this voice, these words were being used against his brother, he had a sudden blind feeling of murder in his heart.

And what was, in the midst of this horror, so perplexing and so troubling, was that this devil's voice had in it as well a curiously human note, as of someone he had known.

Then it came to him in a flash—it was Merrit speaking. The owner of that voice, incredible as it seemed, was none other than that plump, well-kept, jolly looking man, who had always been so full of cheerful and good-hearted spirits every time he had seen him.

Now, behind that evil little partition of glazed glass and varnished wood, this man's voice had suddenly become fiendish. It was inconceivable and, as Joe listened, he grew sick with horror, as a man does in some awful nightmare when suddenly he envisions someone familiar doing some perverse and abominable act. And what was most dreadful of all was the voice of his brother, humble, low, submissive, modestly entreating. He could hear Merrit's voice cutting across the air like a gob of rasping phlegm, and then Jim's low voice—gentle, hesitant, deeply troubled—coming in from time to time by way of answer.

"Well, what's the matter? Don't you want the job?"

"Why—why, yes, you know I do, Bob," and Jim's voice lifted a little in a troubled and protesting laugh.

"What's the matter that you're not getting the business?"

"Why—why . . ." Again the troubled and protesting little laugh. "I *thought* I was . . . !"

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"Well, you're not!" That rasping voice fell harsh upon the air with the brutal nakedness of a knife. "This district ought to deliver 30 percent more business than you're getting from it, and the Company is going to have it, too—or *else!* You deliver or you go right out upon your can! See? The Company doesn't give a damn about you. It's after the business. You've been around a long time, but you don't mean a damn bit more to the Company than anybody else. And you know what's happened to a lot of other guys who got to feeling they were too big for their job, don't you?"

"Why—why, yes, Bob. . . ." Again the troubled and protesting laugh. "But—honestly, I never thought. . . ."

"We don't give a damn what you never thought!" the brutal voice ripped in. "I've given you fair warning now. You get the business or out you go!"

Merrit came out of the little partition-cage into the cleaner light of the outer room. When he saw Joe, he looked startled for a moment. Then he was instantly transformed. His plump and ruddy face was instantly wreathed in smiles, he cried out in a hearty tone: "Well, well, well! Look who's here! If it's not the old boy himself!"

He shook hands with Joe, and as he did so, turned and winked humorously at Jim, in the manner of older men when they are carrying on a little bantering by-play in the presence of a younger one.

"Jim, I believe he gets better-looking every time I see him. Has he broken any hearts yet?"

Jim tried to smile, gray-faced and haggard.

"I hear you're burning them up in the big town," said Merrit, turning to the younger man. "Great stuff, son, we're proud of you."

And with another friendly pressure of the hand, he turned away with an air of jaunty readiness, picked up his hat, and said cheerfully: "Well, what d'ya say, folks? Didn't I hear somebody say something about one of the madam's famous meals, out at the old homestead. Well, you can't hurt my feelings. I'm ready if you are. Let's go."

And smiling, ruddy, plump, cheerful, a perverted picture of amiable good-will to all the world, he sauntered through the door. And for a moment the two brothers just stood there looking at each other, drawn and haggard, with a bewildered expression in their eyes.

In Jim's decent eyes, also, there was a look of shame. In a moment, with that instinct for loyalty which was one of the roots of his soul, he said: "Bob's a good fellow. . . . You . . . you see, he's got to do these things. . . . He's . . . he's with the Company."

Joe didn't say anything. He couldn't. He had just found out something about life he hadn't known before.

And it was all so strange, so different from what he thought it would be.

Words for Federico Garcia Lorca

By Rafael Alberti

THESE are the first words I've written about you since your death, Federico, since that crime for which there are no words committed against you in your own Granada. Although these few lines are intended as a prologue to your *Gypsy Ballads* (*Romancero Gitano*), they are written for you, sent to you, speaking to you through the hearts of the Spanish people who will read them, and who continue to learn your poems by heart.

I remember now the first day of our friendship, in the little garden of the Student House in Madrid, in October 1924. You had just come back from Granada, from Fuente Vaqueros, and you brought with you the first ballad for your book:

Green as I would have you green.
Green wind. Green branches . . .

I heard you read it for the first time. Your best ballad. Without doubt, the best in present-day Spanish poetry. Your "green wind" struck us all, leaving its echo in our ears. Even now, after thirteen years, it continues to sound through the newest branches of our poetry.

Juan Ramón Jiménez, from whom you learned so much, as all of us have learned, created in his *Arias Tristes* the lyric ballad, strange, musical, unforgettable. You, with your "Romance Sonambulo," invented the dramatic form, full of secret chills and mysterious blood-streams. *La Tierra de Alvargonzález* by Antonio Machado is a narrative romance, a terrible Castillian tale put into poetry. It can be told as a story. The happenings in the "Romance Sonambulo" and other poems to be found in your *Romancero Gitano* cannot be recounted. They elude all the efforts of the story-teller. You, on the foundations of the ancient Spanish form of the romance, along with Juan Ramón and Machado, created another style, strange and strong, at once both a support and a crown for the old Castillian tradition.

Then the war came. The people and the poets of our land wrote ballads. In ten months of warfare, nearly a thousand have been collected. You—and you are the greater for it—seem to have influenced almost all of them. Your voice, hidden under other voices, is heard in our struggle. But that which speaks to us the loudest is your blood. It cries out with all its strength, and rises like an immense fist, clenched in accusation and in protest. Nobody wants to believe it. It's impossible. Nobody feels that you are dead. We can't imagine you

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standing in front of a firing squad. They took you out at dawn. Some say to a cemetery. Others, on a road. The truth is . . . but can anyone speak the truth about this? That's how it is.

With their patent leather souls
they come down the road . . .

Who could have warned you that these same civil guards of your poems would one day kill you at dawn on the deserted outskirts of your own Granada? That's how it was! That death wasn't yours.

I was on the island of Ibiza on that eighteenth of July when the insurrection broke it. The civil guards came to look for me. I fled. For seventeen days I wandered in the mountains. Rainer Maria Rilke says that some people die with the death of others, not with their own death that properly belongs to them. It was your death that should have been mine. You were executed. I escaped. But your blood is still fresh, and will be for a long time.

The editions of your *Romancero Gitano* increase. Your name and your memory take root in Spain, in the very heart of our land. Let no one try to transplant those roots. The earth itself where they penetrate would not consent. It would burst into flames, into shot and shell, and scorch the hands of those who try to uproot you. The Spanish Falangists, your assassins, attempt villainously now to take advantage of your glory, riddled by the bullets of their own guns. They want to make of you, falsely, the poet of imperial Spain—Mussolini's poor imperial Spain! Let them try! In their shamelessness your executioners seem to forget that your name and your poetry continue to march, now and forever, on the lips of the fighting people in the ranks of Spain's anti-fascist forces. Each poem of yours we recite echoes like a powerful accusation against your assassins.

We remember. We shall remember. We can't forget. We recognize the faces of those who would expose you, standing your body on foot again to help them continue the terrible farce of the most stupid and horrible of crimes committed in this war. But we will not consent to it. They will fail. We will keep your hands clean—we who were your friends and fellow-poets, Luis Cernuda, Manuel Altolaguirre, Emilio Prados, Vincente Aleixandre, Pablo Neruda, Miguel Hernández, myself. With the same sad and magnificent people of your poems, we will guard your memory, your constant presence, and celebrate your name with the fervor that the poets of old held toward the young Garcilaso de la Vega who rode without a helmet against the ranks of the enemy and died, honored alike for his bravery and his songs.

Five Poems by Federico Garcia Lorca

TRANSLATED BY LANGSTON HUGHES

Ballad of One Doomed

Loneliness without end!
The little eyes of my body
and the big eyes of my horse
never close at night
nor look the other way
where sleep like three boats
tranquilly disappears
in the distance.
Instead, shields of wakefulness,
my eyes, clean and hard,
look toward a north of metals
and of cliffs
where my veinless body
consults frozen cards.
Heavy water-oxen charge
boys who bathe in the moons
of their waving horns.
And the hammers sing
on the somnambulous anvils
of the insomnia of the horseman,
and the insomnia of the horse.

The twenty-fifth of June
they said to Amargo,
Now you can cut if you wish
the oleanders in your courtyard.
Paint a cross on the door
and put your name beneath it,
for hemlock and nettle
shall take root in your side,
and the waters of wet lime
eat at your shoe-leather
at night in the dark
in the mountains of magnet
where water-oxen drink
of the dreaming reeds.
Ask for lights and bells.
Learn to cross your hands
and love the cold air
of metals and of cliffs
because within two months
you'll lie down shrouded.
Santiago moves his starry
sword in the air.
Heavy with silence, behind him
the bent sky flows.
The twenty-fifth of June
Amargo opened his eyes
and the twenty-fifth of August
he lay down to close them.
Men came down the street
to look upon the marked one
who hung on the wall
his loneliness without end.
And the impeccable sheet
with its hard Roman accent
gave death a balance
by the straightness
of its folds.

The Faithless Wife

I took her to the river
thinking she was single,
but she had a husband.

It was the night of Santiago
and almost because I'd promised.
They put out the street lights
and lit up the crickets.
At the farthest corners
I touched her sleeping breasts
and they opened for me
quickly like bouquets of hyacinths.
The starch of her underskirts
rustled in my ears
like a piece of silk
slit by ten knives.
With no silvery light on their crowns
the trees have grown bigger
while a horizon of dogs bark
off by the river.

Beyond the brambles,
the rushes and the hawthornes,

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beneath their mat of hair
I made a hole on the slippery bank.
I took off my tie.
She took off her dress.
I, my belt with the pistol.
She, the four parts of her bodice.
Neither lilies nor snail shells
have such lovely skin,
nor do the crystals of the moon
shine with such a light.
Half full of fire
and half full of cold,
her thighs slip away from me
like frightened fish.

That night ran off
down the best of roads
on a mother-of-pearl colt
with no bridle and no stirrups.
Being a man, I can't tell you
the things that she told me.
The light of understanding
has made me very careful.
Soiled with kisses and sand
I took her from the river
while the swords of the lilies
battled with the air.

I acted like the true
gypsy that I am,
and gave her a present of a work-box
of straw-colored satin,
but I didn't want to love her
because, being married,
she told me she was single
when I took her to the river.

The Gypsy Nun

Silence of lime and myrtle.
Mallow among the herbs.
The nun embroiders gilliflowers
on a straw-colored cloth.
Seven rainbow birds
fly through gray spider webs.
The church groans in the distance
like a bear on its back.
How well she embroiders!
With what grace!
On the straw-colored cloth
she puts flowers of her fancy.
What a sunflower!
What magnolias of spangles and ribbons!
What saffron and what moons
on the cloth for the mass!
Five grapefruits sweeten
in a nearby kitchen.
The five wounds of Christ
cut in Almeria.
In the eyes of the nun
two horsemen gallop.
A far-off final rumor
tears open her shirt-front,
and at the sight of clouds and mountains
in the distant stillness
her heart of sweet herbs and sugar
breaks. Oh!
What a steep plain
with twenty suns above!
What rivers stand on tiptoe
to glimpse her fantasies.
But she keeps on with her flowers
while the light in the breeze
plays a game of chess
at her high grilled window.

The Arrest of Antoñito El Camborio on the Road to Seville

Antonio Torres Heredia,
son and grandson of Camborios,
starts out for Seville to see the bull fights
with a dry reed for a cane.
Dark as a copper-colored moon,
he walks slowly and proudly.
His oily curls fall shining
into his eyes.
Half way down the road
he starts cutting round lemons
and throwing them in the water
until the water turns all golden.
And half way down the road
under the branches of an oak,
the Civil Guards on duty
overtake him elbow to elbow.

The day passes slowly.
The afternoon hangs on one shoulder
and sweeps its bull-fighter's cape
over the sea and over the streams.
The olive groves await
the night of Capricorn,
while a little breeze on horseback
jumps over the hills of lead.
Antonio Torres Heredia,
son and grandson of Camborios,
walks without his reed of a cane
between the five guards
in their three-cornered hats.

Antonio, who are you?
If you were really named Camborio
you'd have made a fountain
of blood with five streams.
You're neither legitimate Camborio
nor anybody else's son.
The gypsies are gone
who used to wander the hills alone.
Their old knives shiver
in the dust.

At nine o'clock at night
they took him to the jail,
while the Civil Guards
drank lemonade.
At nine o'clock at night
they locked up the jail,
while the sky shone brightly
like the croup of a colt.

Death of Antoñito El Camborio

Voices of death are heard
on the Guadalquivir.
Ancient voices drawing near
like the voices of male carnations.
He attacked their shoes
with the bite of a wild boar.
In the fight he leaped
like a soapy dolphin.
He bathed his crimson tie
with enemy blood,
but there were four daggers
so he had to go down.
When the stars with knives
attacked the gray water,
when the young bulls dreamed
veronicas of gilliflowers,
voices of death were heard
on the Guadalquivir.

Antonio Torres Heredia,
Camborio of the tough mane,
dark as a green moon,
voice of male carnation:
Who took your life
near the Guadalquivir?
  My four cousins, the Heredias,
  sons of Benameji.
  What they didn't envy in others,
  they always envied in me:
  my red-brown shoes,
  my medallions of ivory,
  and my skin that's kneaded
  of olives and jasmine.
Ah, Antoñito el Camborio,
worthy of an empress!
Put your mind on the Virgin—
you're about to die.
  Ah, Federico Garcia,
  call the Civil Guards.
  My body is all broken
  like a stalk of grain.

Three spurts of blood there were
and he died in profile.
A piece of live money
that can never be repeated.
A withered angel placed
his head on a cushion.
Others, weary of shame,
lighted a candle.
And when the four cousins
got home to Benameji,
the voices of death were quiet
on the Guadalquivir.

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When Poets Stood Alone

By Dorothy Van Ghent

He stood at last by God's help and the police;
But he remembered the time when he stood alone.
—WALLACE STEVENS: *Anglais mort à Florence.*

THE basic shift from an individualist to a corporate society, which is reflected in every present-day activity and in almost every present-day state of mind, has resulted in a fairly complete discrediting of recent literary tradition. The movement is characterized by volition and consciousness. There is talk of new orientation, of "adjustment," and so forth. Seminars argue on how to embrace the masses in poetry and on how to accommodate the machine. Poetry circles in writers' congresses discuss the difficulties of embodying social significance in the personal lyric. Radical changes in society and accepted philosophy urge similarly radical changes in literature, so much so that we forget to protect ourselves from assuming that literature begins with us.

But despite all this consciousness, there is little analysis of, or perhaps it would be better to say little interest in, the real character of recent traditions, that is, their real character aside from gross philosophical implications. The philosophical implications in the grand sense have been repudiated as effete. And as so often happens when the bath is thrown out, the baby went with it. Now the baby in this case happened to have been a renaissance, and this is unfortunate for us, for a renaissance ought to be something in an America. It ought to be (to change the baby to a dog) one little dog whom we might know and who might know us, and if we have to run with shorn skirts out of earshot of his bark, the time seems awfully long before we can again adjust to our nudities. The nudities to which we must adjust without benefit of tradition are mainly industrialism and social collectivity.

Why without benefit of tradition? Because, so our philosophy shows us, the writers of 1911-29 owed their felicities to the opposites of these facts, to agrarian culture and to individualism; and as social contradictions wore on, the attitudes assumed to be basic to their art became untenable, both for them and for us.

Confining our attention to poetry alone, we find, however, two things that are very curious and not very persuasive about this shift in values. The first is that the "art" of these writers—an ambiguous distinction, of course, and one that must be clarified later—cannot be so identified with whatever effete philosophies they may have held, any more than the baby can be identified with the bathtub. And the second is that there has been a real continuity between certain aspects of the tradition of 1911-29 and our own practice, but that this continuity has been of the most unfortunate character. In other words, where there should have been retention there has been discard, and where there should have been discard there has been retention. All this argues a real lack of literary consciousness. So dominant has been our social and philosophical consciousness, and so abstract, that we have walked right over the matter on which we should exercise ourselves.

Observed from the point of view of philosophy in the gross sense, or from the point of view, in less intellectual poetry, of temperamental bias, the shift from an individualist to a corporate scheme of things and from an agrarian to an industrial culture is very clearly reflected in the poetry of the recent period. Therefore an attempt will be made in the first part of this paper to trace out briefly the features which seem to characterize it. Nevertheless one ought to bear in mind the fact that such a picture is confined to main philosophical aspects and that other aspects lie obscured—even other philosophical aspects, since philosophy is embedded as much in a tenderness for red wheelbarrows as in devotion to death or to the church. The attempt is made merely in order to give the devil his due, since there must be a certain validity in our repudiation of that part of the tradition which is useless to us. It will then be possible to reconstruct those elements which it would be to our disadvantage to lose.

To start at the beginning, the Imagist movement was the touchstone of the poetic renaissance, and the one unadulterated and universally acknowledged Imagist was H.D. In her poetry the hard, the clear, the dehumanized quality of T. E. Hulme's *Third Reich* stood forth with precision. Flowers, stones, and the Greeks. But H.D., as she is described by Amy Lowell, was very busy "flinging herself bravely upon the spears of her reactions": in other words, intense individualism. And because of the basic shift in social attitudes, Imagism of the kind represented by H.D. is dead.

Again, the godfather of all movements was Ezra Pound. From a gross philosophical point of view Mr. Pound's basic shift was Heraclitus: seeing nothing but literature as an antidote to flux, he took flux to his bosom and nursed it on literature: whence the *Cantos* with their disconcerting jumping-around. Chaos, then, in Pound, and chaos is not "facts" or good for us. For Eliot, the other major innovator of the renaissance, the church, and neither is the church facts. For Marianne Moore, "not silence but restraint" and the privilege of being superior people—which again is not the facts of a corporate society. For Wallace Stevens, an increasing sadness and even anguish, an increasing sense that the facts of our present society are the doom of imagination, an increasing fear, loneliness (aloneness having been lost), and preoccupation with the concept of decadence.

As for Sandburg and Frost, renaissance personalities of a peculiarly noble and peculiarly American cast, these more than others are associated with agrarian

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culture, Frost with apple harvests and the ache of ladder rungs against the instep, Sandburg with Kansas cornfields and more or less prairified, lone-wolf, and anarchistic figures. Frost's implied theme of emotional starvation, treated not with protest, but accepted with little questioning as satisfactory raw material for poetry, limits his own territory and also cuts that territory off from a generation with other ideas about facts. Sandburg's agrarianism, however, was never exclusive, for Chicago stood in the middle of it. Therefore, Sandburg, almost alone of the older generation, may be said to have adjusted to the bleak furor of industry. But this description of an "adjustment" in his case is a somewhat strained picture of it. At this point one may say merely that to ascribe an "adjustment" to any particular writer is to indicate that he has been able to fit the cloak of former method and point of view around the awkwardly bulging body of new facts. But everyone is always adjusting; the movement is liquid and linear, not cataclysmic and ponderous; and it is just this idea of unusual adjustment, contrary to what does or ought to happen in poetry, that would cut us off from the values of the only tradition we have—and a very good tradition at that. But more of that later.

In a catalogue of shifts, William Carlos Williams ought probably to have gone up near the top, with the early Imagists. Again, however, as in the case of Sandburg, it is difficult to treat him as a real shifter, or rather, shiftee. Williams is a born outsider, a kind of foreign observer, and also, to speak paradoxically, a born member of the social complex. "Insideness," the personal side of reaction to experience, is very minor or almost absent in his poetry, for his poetry presents experience rather than the personal Dr. Williams; therefore, being an outsider rather than an insider, he is a collective person by nature, for he is not thwarted by an incurable I inside opposing itself to the social manifests about him. This is evidently not a case of adjustment, for Williams is as he always was.

And the catalogue, for all practical purposes, ends here. What may be inferred from it? Following the argument which was set in motion above, liquidation in most cases, adjustment in a few cases, and for us nothing but the facts of life all afresh. Obviously, we do not need to start from new facts, but it may be well to consider first exactly what it is about the tradition that we have decided to call quits on. And that is its gross philosophical implications. Sensitivity for its own sake as in Imagism, or at least in the Imagist *par excellence,* H.D., philosophy of flux and chaos in Pound, religious escape in Eliot, the snobbism of privileged emotions in Moore, doubt and implicit decadence in Stevens, acceptance of emotional barriers in Frost. But poetry is not always the victim of an outgrown or even a wrong-headed philosophy. We do not reproach Dante because he was a monarchist. We do not cease to read Emily Dickinson because she believed in God. There are in poetry, if not acceptable ways of thinking, then ways of looking and of speaking. The point is that though poets do start from the facts and have always done so, they are in a pretty pitiful position if they can't make use of a rich and fertile literary tradition which is the work of their recent predecessors, if they can't take a renaissance when it is handed to them.

IT WOULD therefore be much to our purpose if we should review our heritage from the point of view of ways of looking and speaking, for certainly, given our new facts and new philosophy, we haven't got the hang of how to look at the thing or how to express it. Witness the confusion, the blur and choppiness, both morally and plastically, of our best-intentioned poetry. Clues of this kind are what a literary tradition should provide, especially a tradition so close to us and one so fresh, vigorous, and non-derivative in its time. Curiously, at the source, the tradition resembles nothing so much as the program outlined in 1798 by Wordsworth, in his preface to the *Lyrical Ballads.* Wordsworth's petty fallacies and his archaic rationalizations are mere upholstery; the pith of the matter is the same. The use of a contemporary idiom, clarity and accuracy of presentation, freedom in choice of subject. Another tenet of the Imagists is at least implicit in Wordsworth's preface, and that is freedom of cadence; the use of *vers libre,* carried to the extreme of prose statement in Marianne Moore and often in Williams, finds an awakened ear in Wordsworth's long analysis and commendation of prose rhythms in poetry. Of course, comparison of the Imagist manifesto with Wordsworth's preface is nothing new; it was dug up at the start to discredit the movement, since nothing could be more inept than to associate one's taste with "The Idiot Boy" and "Goody Blake and Harry Gill." But the Imagists did not pose as innovators; they pointed out that their program consisted in the traditional essentials of poetry. Incidentally, it is also unfair to them to derive their practice from the too-long-admired philosophical crochets of T. E. Hulme. A structure like Hulme's, so scandalously anachronistic and figmentary, could do nothing more than provide an apologetic for H.D. after she had happened.

And what then? Unfortunately, it was H.D. herself who came practically to represent the movement. One tends to forget that there were anything but expatriates attached to it, to forget that Sandburg's poetry grows out of the same basic program (and not alone, God forbid, the fog coming on little cat feet), that Frost's does also, that the valuable precision and objectivity of Miss Moore cannot be dissociated from it, that William Carlos Williams was one of the first signers and that he writes much the same kind of poetry today.

But it may be said that the Williams-Moore-Sandburg outfit are not "contemporary," that they are too narrow (Williams and Moore) to provide intellectual stimulus to the proletariat, or too diffuse (Sandburg) to be poetic and too sentimental to be safe. This is such a shabby notion that one hates to make note of it. On the other hand, not all poets of the past generation have had as little real influence as these. The two who have done most to model the contemporary tone in poetry are Eliot and Pound, and it is interesting to observe along just what lines this continuity of tradition has followed. To account for it on the one hand, and to account on the other hand for the neglect of the

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Williams-Moore-Sandburg combination of qualities, one has to ascertain first what it was in Eliot and Pound that attracted followers and how this differed from the characteristics of the other group. For one must remember that, in the beginning, the program on all sides was pretty similar. Where did the cleavage happen?

In the case of Eliot, the difference is clear. Though Eliot's own talent is original and eminent, and though he cannot be convicted of the faults of his imitators, nevertheless that aspect of his work which has been a determinant influence in contemporary writing is a kind of rhetoric. With Eliot himself it is not so much rhetoric as idiom; his great gift is his ability to invent idiom which, once invented, seems as natural for the world at large to use as bathtubs or radios. But since he is a learned man, and since also he holds to views which have behind them the dimly glittering wealth of centuries of esotericism, his way of speaking has become for us all mixed up with his learning. Critics are gloved cavaliers when they come at him; his idiom is palpably echoed by Tate and Blackmur; atheistic writers show as much spiritual conceit in the use of his word "heresy" for critical analysis as if it came direct and devout to them from the church fathers. Eliot stands in high regard even with the young proletarians who deplore his essential views. And all this means in practice is that Eliot's influence on poetry has been almost completely a verbal influence. The most flagrant examples occur in the poetry of Allen Tate, where Eliot's rhetoric of irony is borrowed almost bodily to convey not the slightest iota of meaning. It must still be kept in mind that the "American renaissance" was not primarily a verbal renaissance, that its interest in language was not for the sake of language but for the sake of the clear and unencumbered presentation of objects, or, as they were called, images.

Pound's case is a little ambiguous. Most vigorous sponsor of the new program, which had to do essentially with clear objective presentation, he, too, was inventor of a powerful idiom. Pound never really deviated from the program; where the *Cantos* seem scrambled, it is Pound's Heraclitean philosophy which does the scrambling, whereas each ideographic "fact"-object-or-image in the *Cantos* is hard and clear in outline. In Pound, the ideographic method is the method of Imagism, but it is not this method—which is the important thing about Pound—and has had an influence on later poetry, but rather the way Pound puts his ideograms together; in other words, his influence generally has been an influence on syntax and grammar, and, in most hopeless cases, an influence actually on punctuation alone.

One of his most notable pupils has been Archibald MacLeish; the long "rhythms" of *Conquistador* are Pound-ish rhythms only by virtue of the fact that the lines so often start with "and," that the images are linked by "and" rather than separated into independent syntactical units, and that asterisks and dots are used to supply other connections—usually connections between something and nothing, whereas in Pound this lax kind of trail-off has the real physical significance of a voice which has got tired of talking or of an interruption in conversation. A more obscure and youthful relation is Muriel Rukeyser. Even more than with MacLeish the superficiality of the influence is evident: Pound's vigor has become plain roughness, his ideographic method has become a wholesale jumbling together of any and every vague undefined element.

Now, therefore, to repeat, what has happened to the American renaissance as seen through Ezra Pound is again a transformation into wholly verbal interests. Objectivity and clarity and "contemporary idiom" were the main tenets of the early program. It is as though this program had never been. For there is as yet almost no objectivity or clarity in poetry aside from that of the older generation who themselves participated in the American renaissance. Neither is there actually much contemporary idiom: this may be objected to, but idiom as it is meant here is something other than the lifting of the language of the cocktail bar or the waterfront or the machine-shop into a page of stuff that looks like verse.

Along these same lines, and before returning to that other aspect of the American tradition which might profitably be employed, one notes the revival of certain types of poetry, revivals which have almost all been in the shape of poets whose most striking qualities are verbal qualities. Foremost among them is Gerard Manley Hopkins. To denigrate Hopkins's influence is not to denigrate Hopkins, for a poet is not at the mercy of his imitators. But certainly it is Hopkins's extraordinary shifts with language, combined with the fact, unromantic for us, that he was so long unappreciated, which constitute his importance for poets today. Almost no one would allow that the "Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo" was a wretched poem, which it is. Hopkinsisms are among the paramount types of contemporary poetic usages. Another poet who is more a part of our background but whose influence as it appears today is also largely verbal is Emily Dickinson; curiously, we have got at her through the medium of W. H. Auden, who erected her accidental felicities of quaintness into a system. Another is John Donne. All of these are minor poets, and all are admired for qualities which have nothing to do with our contemporary "facts," for qualities which have little to do with their own real importance. The point here is that the verbal influence which they have exerted is one which is bad for poetry, and bad most of all for a generation of poets whose desire is to get down to the brass tacks of the real world.

So much then for survivals of a tradition, survivals which have been of an unfortunate type. So far they have been looked upon as verbal, but verbal qualities are also qualities of mind, at least reflect mental dispositions. This particular mental disposition which they reflect is hard to put the finger on, precisely because it is a disposition for ambiguity. Where language is used for the sake of language, what the language *says* is a slipshod unknown, and for a long time we have been habitually thrilled by the unknownness of unknowns. The habit goes far back into the romantic revival. In fairly recent times it has been dressed up to fit the mechanical age, most especially by Paul Valéry, who, through a trick of austerity, conferred

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on a horrendous something he called an invariable (changeless element, unique and monotonous element, naked ego, etc., etc.) all the scientific plausibility of a center of gravity. Now, as to contemporary poetry, the statement is this: that since clear objective presentation is rare indeed, and since the most remarkable thing about it is its verbal thrillers, what the poetry has to say is simply an unknown. From the most distant parts and disparate parties we find "impossibly tremoring lakes" (in a poem by a "proletarian") and "improbable mists" (in a poem by a Southern Agrarian). Here then is a mode of expression used in the most catholic manner by poets of diverse political faiths. Neither contains a grain of sense: both have a spurious poetic allure arising from the unknown quality of what lies beyond the "improbable" and the "impossible." There is something fascinating about all this. It is the fascination of decadence.

I imagine that what critics who deplore the continuation of the recent tradition find objectionable in the practice of its epigones is represented to some degree by the analysis given above. For though most contemporary poets are Marxists, and though innumerable lines may be dug up in proof of their dialectical approach to political history—and this has already been done in the recent objections and counter-objections among reviewers of and contributors to *New Letters in America*—yet the *sine qua non* of Marxist dialectics is conspicuous by its absence in contemporary poetry, and that is materialism. And an implicit materialism is necessary not only in poetry which would represent this social epoch; materialism is implicit in all poetry that may be called good.

But these aspects are not the essence of the tradition. There could be no better exercise at getting at its essence than by a study of the poetry of Sandburg, Williams, and Moore, poets whose work has been underestimated and neglected while we have taken unto ourselves a portentous verbal canopy. It is, of course, a little shocking to suggest that the poetry of Marianne Moore, this poetic Audubon of jerboas and Egyptian pulled glass bottles, may have more to do with "social reconstruction" than the poems one reads nowadays about strikers and the fascist threat. The intention here is to point out the value of Miss Moore's approach, as distinguished from that of younger poets who have ignored or deliberately repudiated the traditions of her generation. The value lies in the approach, as well of Williams and of Sandburg as of Miss Moore, and no large claims of greatness are made in the favor of these poets. Distinct, however, is the difference of attitude between them and our own contemporaries, and obvious is the need for reassuming the tradition which they represent.

WHY obvious? Well, what are the "facts" which the writers of today have to face? In large, they are an industrial culture as against an agrarian culture, and social collectivity as against cultural individualism. Broken down, these mean, among other things, the following: first and foremost a *common* ground for communication. Collectivity means things held in common, with masses of people functioning in a common activity, just as individualism means things held apart. What, in poetry as in life, are those things which may be held in common? They are the material things, which, when held in common, imply a common mode of conceptualism; just as things held apart imply disparate and exclusive modes of conceptualism, in other words, conceptual absolutes and unknowns. But how "hold" material things in poetry? Well, talk about them. Here, in Miss Moore, are jerboas, steeple-jacks, students, pelicans, nectarines, fish, monkeys, roses, elephants, cats, snakes, mongooses, etc., etc. Here, in Dr. Williams, are George the janitor, glass pitchers, white chickens, palm trees, cod heads, bulls, wallpaper, neon signs, sea-elephants, baseball pitchers, red wheelbarrows, and flowers and flowers and flowers. Here, in Carl Sandburg, are dago shovel men, Jew fish-criers, Anna Imroth, Mamie, Mag, the dynamiter, the ice handler, Chick Lorimer, Inez Milholland, Don Magregor. But it is not enough to say "talk about them." One must insist that it is "talk about *them*."

This injunction is the essence of the American tradition in poetry, the essence of the renaissance, the essence of Imagism. The early program broached a method of handling material which endowed the *material* with importance by virtue of the clarity of its presentation. Parenthetically, this has always been the method of good poetry. The method of bad poetry is to handle material in a way which gives importance to the poet who is doing the writing, and thus the material is blurred, is no longer, actually, material. The first is the collective method. The second is the individualist method. For material that is known, *i.e.*, clearly presented, is the only thing that provides common ground between minds, is the only thing that issues in collective conceptualism or—a familiar word—"communication."

Right away, of course, enters the objection that neither Williams nor Moore are widely read and that they are considered obscure, Williams obscure with a kind of formlessness and eccentric incoherence, Moore obscure largely because her poetry must be read with more than extra pains of attention—"obscurity" lying thus in the reader's, rather than the poet's, lethargy—and also because she has voluntarily limited herself to "the less popular emotions." All right. The one case stands in the disrepute of smug privilege and superiority —not only because a lot of us have a devilish time getting close to any Egyptian pulled glass bottles or Malay water-dragons, or even to Mount Rainier, but also because the "not silence but restraint" of superior people always seems to cap the climax of any one poem, which is irksome. But no claims for greatness have been made. A minor poet, especially a contemporary minor poet, and especially a contemporary minor poet who is so annoying as to be interested only in minor emotions, in such a case the blemishes do stand up and shout. But no set of blemishes outweighs, in these cases, the positive values of objectivity and precision, for these are the virtues of great poetry and virtues we are sadly in need of.

On the side of Sandburg, who is widely read, the

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apposite objection is one of diffuseness. One is inclined to say that "this is not poetry." And the case is difficult. If America as a democracy, or as a nation founded on democratic principles, differs sharply in this respect from other nations which have built up literary traditions, the process of comparing our traditions with theirs ought to yield some contrasts in the results. Sandburg's poetry provides such a contrast, and this is one reason why he forms—like Whitman—a difficult case. We have nothing to compare him with on the other side of the Atlantic, except possibly the Bible. Is it poetry or isn't it?

THIS brings into focus the most salient aspect of the recent American tradition in general, and that is its anti-literary character. The Imagist program was essentially anti-literary, just as the program of the *Lyrical Ballads* was anti-literary. The fact is always commented on in a discussion of the poetry of Williams; Marianne Moore comments on it vigorously in respect to her own poetry; and, for his very carelessness, no poet is more an exponent of the anti-literary than Carl Sandburg. Then is it poetry or isn't it? As to Sandburg, the most striking quality of his work is its oral quality; no more wonderful rhythms are to be found anywhere. Rhythm is, of course, one of the most, or the most, indispensable element of form, and no contemporary "literary" poet has achieved such rhythmic formality as Sandburg. *Vide* Allen Tate. *Vide* that formalist, Yvor Winters. Again, a rhythmic innovator of the first order is Marianne Moore. It is the quality of the rhythms in her one great poem, "The Grave," which contributes—one cannot say how much, but a large part—to the extraordinary firmness of that poem.

If, then, to return to Sandburg, we grant the beauty of rhythm in his poetry and this as a major theoretical element of form, and if the possession of organic form is one of the characters of poetry, the argument is partially settled. Which also does away with the ascription of a "fallacy of expressive form" in his case, *i.e.,* the attempt to express a big loose America by writing big loose poems; for, as has been pointed out, organic rhythm is a formal provision of a higher and rarer order than any of the iambs of the Stanford classicists or the mechanics of reason of Tennessee "reactionaries."

If, on the other hand, one must justify Sandburg as to content or "message" or whatever futile term one wishes to appropriate for the other character of poetry, it is enough to point out his theme of material or quantitative productiveness as the basis of the qualitative productiveness of the future, his faith that the America of "tall possessions" can eventually turn its energy toward the establishment of a living democracy. After all, is there anyone who has said anything more significant? Perhaps so, in cleverer ways. Taken by itself, the thing is not so profound, and perhaps that is why poets have felt they had to dress it up, to sophisticate it with patches of moral equivocation. With Sandburg only is this a palpable faith. Like Whitman's, his poetry must be read in bulk, and since we are accustomed to judging excellence by single examples rather than by total poetic personalities, we are inclined to require of him the type of literary virtuosity which infects most of the poetry of our own epoch.

Leaving, however, our apologetics for Sandburg as a poet, we must return to that phase of his work which it is pertinent for us to notice right here, namely, the same objectivity which characterized the early program of the poetic renaissance. Instead of using his material in the elegiac manner of those who write poetry in order to tout their own doldrums, he uses it in order to clarify it, to present it as itself important, to lift it from surroundings that choke and nullify it, into high singularity of meaning.

This leads directly into the curious phenomenon of a poetry which is objective, that is, whose ramifications are outward and away from the individual, and yet which is manifestly the product of a personality. "Total poetic personalities" we have said, referring to Sandburg and Whitman, for certainly in the poetry of both it is the man who is manifest. Carrying the description to the poetry of Moore and Williams, we find in each the naïve presence of the writer. Williams will point out flowers to you, or a child batting a ball, or "gigantic highschool boys ten feet tall" on an illumined signboard, but you feel you'd never have seen them if Dr. Williams himself hadn't been there in the poem to look out of the window for you. Similarly, with Marianne Moore, the very preciousness of the assorted relics that are laid out in line after line of a poem speaks definitely of the certain kind of a person so extraordinary as to have such interests. The poet is *concierge* and opens the gate and gives you a ticket. He is a docent who takes you around personally to the numbered cases and decently inserts a little information about their contents. You can't get away from him. The condition is somewhat of a paradox if one looks at it only abstractly as a combination of objectivity and private personality. It is not a paradox if one looks at it as the inevitable condition of a materialistic situation. For here is the objective material world and the poet is in it too, otherwise the world wouldn't be there for you to look at, and it wouldn't be material. Take away the poet's personality and you have, presumably, an "objective" poem, for it is sans the element of human individuality; but you have, instead, a loose uncommunicative rumination, a highly *subjective* poem, without a single cleat to Parnassus offered to the reader.

A good deal has been written, both explicitly as criticism, and implicitly as a type of attitude in poetry, against the concept of the poet as personality; all this being mainly a supercilious snub to Shelley, with his poet as *vates,* as participator in divine creation, as fashioner of the social potentialities. Most outspoken is Allen Tate, who gets his cue from Valéry. Mr. Tate puts it this way, that he, as poet, does not have any "experience"; he is merely an anonymous machine for concocting experiences for readers. Valéry, earlier, perpetrated this portable-typewriter attitude, wheels in the head that could go round and round turning out "thought" without the slightest necessary connection with the petty moral persuasions of the poet or with his environment, an "ego" as naked as a zero, as formid-

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ably superior to human considerations as a center of gravity. Though the company would not appreciate such an addition to their midst, Miss Gertrude Stein expresses the same philosophical absolutism in her recent book, *Geographical History of America*, whose thesis is the non-relation of human nature and the human mind. All this is pretentious nonsense, of course, and we see it as such by the bare statement. But it is fearful to estimate the prevalence of the attitude as it is implied in poetry which is overtly social in intention. The thing is insidious. It stands in relation to poetry as fetishism of commodities stands in relation to capitalist economy. And just as it requires the strong discipline of a voluntary leadership to achieve a non-capitalist order under conditions of "capitalist encirclement," so it requires a difficult discipline to write poetry like a materialist in a mental atmosphere that is humid with Valérian hocus-pocus. Perhaps it would all work out more sensibly if actually matured personalities should appear in poetry—if poets should begin writing like men of will, as distinguished from men of good-will. The condition is the primary condition for social reconstruction in real life; it is also the primary condition for reconstruction of thought, that is, of poetry. For the sake of critical continuity, one may point out again here that the tradition of the twenties in American poetry was one, on the one hand, of materialist objectivity, and on the other hand, or concomitantly, of developed and evident personalities.

At the head of this essay a couple of lines from Wallace Stevens stand as epigraph, announcing the bafflement and despair of a person who has lost orientation in a world where matter crowds out essence, quantity engulfs quality, and mechanized institutions seem to exist solely for the purpose of overreaching themselves day after day in vulgarity and aimlessness. Wallace Stevens's theme has always had to do with the imagination as an ordering function in a disorderly world. Like Santayana, the exponent of a creative skepticism, he has found satisfaction in the plasticity of apparitions, and he has found faith in the pure animation of nature.

The man who remembers the time "when he stood alone," when the police did not have to prop him up, is remembering the time when imagination was fresh, vigorous, and vivid, when seeming and being were the same thing, when apparitions were valid by reason of their appearance, when the feeling of the animal was his right to the claim of existence. Now with the voracious encroachment of vulgar materialism, of capitalist materialism, animal feeling seems to have been swamped under an accumulation of useless goods. Goods, material goods, have piled up in huge heaps, and man, the animal, dwindles as they pile up. Similarly the imagination which was accustomed to feed on the plastic beauty of the material object is now stunned by the accumulation of useless objects, not only useless objects, but objects that are soul-destroying by the very aimlessness of their production. The poetry of Stevens, as its theme of decaying imagination becomes more overt, has also gradually lost much of the imaginative fervor it had before its subject-matter became more ideological, before its subject-matter became decadence itself.

And here comes the equation. Identifying the imagination with a materialist order that is human and naïve, he identifies the loss of personal integrity with the conditions of vulgar—that is, capitalistic—materialism; and according to this equation the more material that is aimlessly and wantonly heaped up, the fewer persons there are in the sense of persons of integrity and personality. The man who remembers the time when he stood alone is remembering the time when he could value things for what they were, intrinsically; for then he stood also as a thing among things.

And this, in its positive aspect, is the attitude represented in the poetry which has been dealt with in this paper. It is basic because it is *in* the poetry. It is not merely contingent, as are the philosophies of flux or escape which have been pointed out as conditioning our literary heritage. The poets who have been dealt with here were interested in observing the material fact, simply bcause that fact was interesting and beautiful in its own right. This is the human and the naïve point of view. It is the point of view of a socialist economy.

When such an attitude obtains, there can be no question of "adjustment" to novel facts—as adjustment to the new technology—no problems arising as to how to put machines, for instance, into poetry; no arguments on "regionalism" and recommendations for getting the home landscape into one's blood before attempting to put it into words; for machines, as to the method of one's observance of them, are no different from apples, landscapes no different from wheelbarrows; all are interesting and all are exterior. Is there anything, for example, in the method of W. C. Williams which makes it more difficult to handle electric signboards than primroses? Or in the method of Miss Moore which makes her less articulate in the idiom of "business documents and schoolbooks" than in that of Edmund Burke or Sir John Hawkins? Or in the method of Sandburg that makes him less perspicuous in presenting Mrs. Gabrielle Giovanitti than in presenting cowboys? No, there isn't. And to assume "adjustment" to modern conditions as necessary is to assume a stasis and an absolutism in the person who does the adjusting, for, instead of being in plastic continuity with the observed facts, he has to unbuckle a notch here and ease up a cog there in order to make room for the world in his private system.

In real life, under existing circumstances, this attitude is annulled for all practical purposes, and hence nostalgia and escapism; but in the poetry of Marxist poets it should be living and directive. The only constant limitation which makes itself felt in much of the poetry considered above is the lack of an adequate theme and hence of a mechanism for the carriage of ideas; but today the theme is given and a mechanism for ideas has evolved accordingly. What is lacking today is the materialist attitude, that is, the attitude of the dialectical materialist. And the more materialist poetry is in this sense—and it has, in our recent tradition been very much so—the more, by natural concomitancy, are there poets who are integrated personalities, men of imagination, men of will, men who "stand alone."

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Pickup

By Saul Levitt

MOE SNYDER met Esther while spending a week-end with his Aunt Molly at Coney Island. He picked her up on the boardwalk at eleven o'clock with the moon high over the footprinted sands. The boardwalk was jammed. Aunt Molly was orthodox and the way she had set up supper, watching the spoons and forks and the prayer before supper, had driven him out of the house quickly. He chased up to the boardwalk, whistling a song and hoping he could pick up a girl. He was a tall, red-headed youngster with an easy smile, on the lookout for a girl, puffing at a cigarette as he pushed his way through the crowd. The beach was empty after the full, hot day of limbs twined and twined about each other on the sand. The rollers came up out of darkness far out; they came up and into sight like lightning, streaking up the sand.

He stopped for a moment near the rail, threw his cigarette out on the sand. There was a girl standing near the rail, six feet away, and Moe thought she was nice. He stared up at the moon. She was looking, too, and he sat himself on the rail, shifting his eyes between the moon and the black-haired girl until she saw him. He said, "It's a nice night," and she nodded and he said, "How about a cigarette?" "All right," she said. He got off the rail and went over and lit a cigarette for her. He suggested a walk, and they walked for a while on the boardwalk, and then Moe suggested walking on the shore along the smoothened sand, wiped clear of the million footprints by the receding tide. They went down and walked along the shore. Esther was a plump girl with sturdy legs and full hips. Her arms, free in a sleeveless blue waist, were brown; her black hair was cut short and boyish.

They went along the sand, and they sat at last on a bulkhead, watching the receding tide smash against a rough breakwater of rocks, sending spray into their faces. He put his arms around her waist, and she said she had noticed him, too, on the boardwalk and had decided he was a nice boy. "Is that so?" he said, feeling surprised and thinking that he had been the one to do all the seeing and the getting acquainted. "I'm staying out here with my cousin," she said. "I'm out here with my aunt, she's very orthodox," said Moe, "you know about dishes and everything." She laughed. "I hate that, don't you?" said Esther. "It's lousy," said Moe, "you'd think they got rid of that stuff when they left the old country, but they still hang on."

To their right rolled the Giant Wheel and the Red Devil Race and all the other amusements of the island. The neons played in blue and red and purple along the boardwalk. "What are you doing tomorrow?" asked Moe. She thought she would be down at the beach all day. "I'll be over at your place," he said.

And he met her the next day. They stayed on the beach close to one another on the crowded sand and he taught her to swim a little better, for which she was very grateful. He found himself staring at her eyes, noticing the lashes and the snub nose and the swarthiness of her cheeks, and watching her hips as she went down in a green bathing suit with a white cap on her head to take a dip in the dirty Atlantic Ocean off Coney Island.

He took her home that night to a dirty little street in Brownsville, off Pitkin Avenue, and seeing the peddlers and the crowds and the kids in the gutters, dirty and shouting, he said to her, "God, it's just like my street in the Bronx." They laughed. He went up to the Bronx in the hot, crowded train and came home to his street in the Bronx which was just like the street in Brownsville where Esther lived. He got in late, everybody was asleep, and he went to bed because he had to be up early the next day.

THE NEXT DAY he was thinking about her. At the shipping table, with an apron tied around his waist, he wrapped the dresses for shipment to Omaha, Frisco, and points east, and he whistled the way he did every day at work. He was head shipping clerk for Sandler & Son, sixteen-fifty dresses, working in a caged room with a glazed concrete floor for twenty-five dollars a week. He had a black boy for an assistant and they teamed nicely on the shipping table. They sang a duet of popular songs every day. Old Man Sandler came in forty times a day to complain about the slowness of the shipping department. They wiped their steaming heads and grinned at Old Man Sandler and went on working and singing songs. The models went sliding past the caged shipping room in negligee and they said, "Hello, Red." "Hello, kid," said Moe. At noon he went out to lunch with one of the cutters and told him about Esther.

He thought of her all afternoon in a clean and soulful way and not the way he had originally wanted to think of her. On the boardwalk on Saturday he had thought of her in one way, but now he was thinking of her in another way that he didn't like. It bothered him.

He went home to his crowded house. It was noisy at supper with the old man and the sister, Sarah, and the kid brother, Joey, all having something to say and his mother almost in tears because of the heat. They all fought over the bathroom and then over the supper. The old man couldn't stand strawberries and sour cream and said he was moving out never to come back. Sarah's boy friend called up in the drugstore across the street and she got up in the middle of her supper and ran down to answer the call. When she came up, the potatoes were cold and had to be warmed up. Little Joey was tugging at his brother's arm all through the meal, trying to tell him about a big fellow around the

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corner who had beaten him up. "What do you want me to do about it?" said Moe. "Aw, go down and kill 'im," begged Joey, "go down and beat 'im up." "Leave me alone, kid," said Moe.

He wanted to think. He went up to the roof, trying hard to think about things, about Esther and the sunny week-end at Coney. There was so much noise in the house all the time, enough to drive a guy crazy. I'll take out this dame Wednesday, she works on Eighteenth.

He met her after work on Wednesday and they went to a movie. And after that he saw her regularly more or less and told her about his home, and she told him about hers, and they talked about their jobs. They did this over the hot summer, and went on trips up the Hudson and to open-air movies. He thought it was great, and gradually forgot about what he had thought in the beginning. It was funny to him that he had changed like that. Sometimes they got passionate, on the boat and in the hallway in Brooklyn when he took her home. They quarreled once or twice that fall, once he started it and once she, and each time it was because of something at home.

Sarah was getting married and getting out, and she wasn't going to give any money at home, which left it all on his twenty-five bucks and the old man's two days a week at union-scale wages. She came home one night and said, "Well, I'm glad I'm getting out of this dump and into a home of my own. God, am I happy—no more fighting." She talked like that for an hour and bawled. There was so much hate in her face Moe was bewildered. Joey stood around, his face puckered up, and asked his big brother for a dime and got it and went down. "Aren't you going to give any money when you get out?" asked Moe. "Not a nickel," said Sarah, "not a penny." "Even five dollars would help," he said. "Not a penny," said Sarah. The old man and Mrs. Snyder were out of it. He felt they were out of it, that they didn't count and couldn't help any more. It was as if he were seeing it for the first time. The old man stood to one side smoking a cigarette, and his hand puttered around his chin helplessly.

Moe went downtown to meet Esther that night, and the sight of her waiting for him, in a gray and green outfit, her swarthy face so reliant-looking, somehow helped him out of a mood. They took in a Broadway show and talked. Esther talked about the two of them doing this and that in a way which he resisted. It was as if they were to be going together for a long time. "Oh, can that 'we' stuff," he snapped, the freckles darkening on his face, and that dark feeling spreading over his insides again as it had earlier that evening when listening to Sarah. He took her home without another word.

On the way home from Brooklyn he wondered why in hell he had to be seeing a Brooklyn girl when the Bronx was full of girls. He was through with her. He'd seen her for four months now and it was enough. Nothing was coming of it anyway, and if it kept up this way he might even think of marrying the girl. He was through.

But the next day he thought of her again, she swept in hard against all of him as if she had her arms around him there in the caged little room where he worked. At noon he had to write her a note, and the next morning, and the morning after that he looked in the mail. A week later there was an answer.

She started something herself once, too, talking to him on a November evening as they walked to the station. He couldn't get it straight. She said it was so hard at home, and in the factory they timed you if you went to the toilet, and maybe they oughtn't to see each other any more. On the corner she held onto him.

"Do you think I'm trying to make you marry me, Moe, darling?" she said. "You know I'm not trying to do that."

"Well, but we could anyway," said Moe. "God, if I thought you were trying to get married and had picked on me, I would have stopped seeing you a long time ago. But what the hell, let's go down to City Hall at noon tomorrow, whaddya say, kid?"

"Are you sure, now, Moey boy," said Esther. "Are you sure you'll never, never say I made you get married?"

"I'm positive," he said. "Didn't I ask you?"

They went walking down Broadway, all the way down. Snow fell. It was the first snow of the year. They were draped in it, and it was cold on their hands and they weren't wearing gloves. They walked all the way down to Fourteenth Street in the snow, the slush forming after a while. Their feet got cold. He told her about the Monday after he met her and what the cutter had asked him, whether he was going to have an affair with her. "This is an affair all right," he said, "it's some affair, isn't it?" He left her at Fourteenth and walked all the way up to Forty-second, with his feet numb and his hands blue, admiring the skyscrapers lighted through the snow. The next day at noon they went down to City Hall and got married.

BUT THEY WANTED a honeymoon and didn't know how in hell to get it and what they were to do about their people at home who didn't know and weren't going to know until it got better for them. They had to scout around for money, too. They thought about the swell places in which you might spend a winter honeymoon—Florida, or California, or Bermuda, and had a lot of fun thinking about those places, the rates for boats and fast trains to tropical isles with pictures of mermaids on surf boards and fellows in linen suits and Panama hats.

It was winter. When they went out for a wedding supper in a restaurant on Forty-first Street it was cold. They had been looking at the magazines with the pictures of all the warm southern resorts for winter honeymoons, and they knew they couldn't do it. Somehow or other they ought to do something. The supper had been good. They stood around undecidedly on the curb, looking up at the buildings and not knowing what to do, what was the right thing to do. Florida rode in on them through the cold. They stood with their hands in each other's pockets not knowing what to do.

And when they went to Forty-second Street, he knew he was going to leave her there, let her go off to Brooklyn as if it was just a date for the evening. It put them in a temper. They weren't mad at each other, but at everything else, and yet the everything else was nothing

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that they could put their hands on. They turned it on each other. They fought. He said, "Maybe it's a mistake, maybe we shouldn't have done it." "We'll get a divorce," said Esther. "Tomorrow. I don't care."

They laughed suddenly, troubled and laughing and kissing good-bye, and he went uptown and she downtown. The next day he raised twenty-five bucks in the place. Alf, the assistant, loaned him ten and one of the cutters fifteen, and he got Old Man Sandler to give him a week off on the ground that he was sick. Esther took a week off too. At home he told them he was sick; he had got a week off with pay, he was going up to Fallsburg. He didn't give a damn if they believed him or not. Little Joey said, "Give me a quarter," and he gave it to the kid brother, the while he told them that he was going up to Fallsburg and had got a week off with pay. "How nice," said Mrs. Snyder.

He met Esther at Forty-second Street outside of Liggetts. They decided, with fifty dollars between them, to spend a week at a Broadway hotel and lugged their grips around Broadway and landed at last in a hotel off Forty-third Street. The clerk registered them with wise eyes, the bellboy looked at them with wise eyes. Their room, with bathroom adjoining, looked bare. There was a dresser, a bed with paint peeling off the bedstead. On the first night neons winked on and off their bed in a lurid purple glow. Sun streamed into their room in the morning. They called up the clerk for breakfast to be sent up. Moe cracked his hands luxuriously and got up and trotted around the room, and Esther sat up watching and applauding. Breakfast came up on a tray. They had breakfast in bed and Moe said it was like the movies with Joan Crawford.

The first day was grand for them, but later they felt bad. They fell into a mood of worry about afterward. What were they going to do after the week? But that night, as they slipped into bed, the mood vanished. Daylight brought it back again, evening saw it vanish. When they sat in their room in the evening, after supper in the hotel dining-room downstairs, they talked about a million things—how nice it would be if people could live without the crowding that you got in Brownsville and the Bronx. Wednesday night they talked that way. It broke on them after a day at a movie. They remembered how they grew up, she on a street in Brooklyn and he in the Bronx. But here they were in a hotel off Broadway, with breakfast brought up on a tray and you could sit at noon in a restaurant and have chow mein, with a band playing. It was Wednesday night, four more days to go. The neons of Broadway broke into their window, red and blue across the dresser and bed. They took a walk up Broadway under an intense blue-black sky. A moocher staggered out of a doorway for a dime, and they dug into their pockets and gave it to him.

Thursday night they talked about where they would live some day. Esther thought Flatbush lovely, and Columbia Heights was fine, overlooking the bay and quiet; and Moe said there were swell places around Van Cortlandt Park. "No kid of mine will ever know what a slum looks like," said Moe. "He'll have to have grass in front of him." Esther asked him if he liked to play tennis. She said she used to watch the girls playing tennis in Prospect Park, but was always too tired after work and never got around to doing it, and it cost too much to get a racquet and balls. "I'd like to play baseball," said Moe, stretching out on the bed, "I'd like to get up on Sunday morning and go out to Van Cortlandt and play ball, and I'd like to read books and listen to concerts."

Esther stood at the window, talking and pulling gently at the curtain. Her dark face glowed. "I could take piano lessons," she said. She looked at her fingers, wrinkled at the tips from sewing.

"You know what I wanted to do when I was a kid?" he said, laughing. "I just remembered it. I wanted to get into radio and be a radio engineer. When I first heard a radio as a kid, someone put a pair of earphones on my head, the announcer said Chicago, and Jesus, what a feeling!"

Their minds ran free, like muscles long unused. They talked late.

The next day it was dark and clouded and cold, and they sat still and silent in their room and didn't seem to have much to say to each other. Moe thought of next week, next week, and he asked Esther if she wanted to go down. "No," she said, "I'm staying here today, I don't feel well." He went down and got over to the depot where the busses pull out and stood there watching them for an hour almost, with their markers, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Philadelphia, with the people getting off and on, loaded with grips. And all around him people went by, muffled up to their ears and on the run for something. He stared at them for an hour, and it gave him an irritated feeling. And when he came back to the hotel, Esther was lying on the bed and crying.

"Oh, what's the matter, kid?" he said, kissing her. "Listen, kid, we'll have a great time together. Hasn't it been great so far, hasn't it been grand? Couldn't you tell we were born for each other?"

"I'm just a cry-baby, Moey," she said. "I just like to cry, can't I cry without you thinking that I'm sick or sad?"

They laughed. It was a dark day, cold and with a raw wind racing through the side-streets. They fell into a silence afterward that lasted through the next day, not talking much and kissing almost perfunctorily, with little moments of passion gushing up and dying down. Saturday night they saw a play and had a couple of cocktails in a tavern afterward, and in the room they talked again. Their minds seemed free and easy again, the way they had been on Wednesday when they talked about where they might live and the things they would like to do. Esther was sure she would learn to play the piano. And Moe thought of spring, of playing baseball on Sunday morning in Van Cortlandt and he told Esther about the fellows who came there with their kids on Sunday mornings and took them rowing on the lake. He felt old and responsible and glad about it, though he knew he wouldn't have been glad about it a year ago. But he was glad thinking about it now.

Snow came down outside their window as they talked. It wasn't cold but tingling out, their tongues felt free and daring with the drinks they had taken, and outside it looked cheery and pleasant with the crowds and the theaters lighted and the snow decking buildings. Moe

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said he might go to school again, he might continue his high school at night and go on to college and study radio engineering. Esther was sure about her piano. They were calm but sure of themselves that night. Living seemed to be big and powerful in front of them, full of quest and of due reward for trying.

But Sunday rolled into their room, the winter sunlight slanted across their bed in the morning, they looked at each other frowning. When they looked through the window at figures muffled they knew it was very cold today. They had to go home tonight. The night before had vanished, the week had vanished with the long evenings when their minds had soared. They were going home. At noon, at dinner, they said it hadn't been a bad honeymoon, but it would have been great if they could have gone to Florida. Outside on the street, after they finished packing upstairs and walked the streets, the sunlight was frozen against the back walls of the theaters. Broadway was deserted. They walked, and they took a bus and went along the Drive with the Hudson frozen in parts and showing black water in the center and the Palisades Wall bleak and gray. Blue frosty afternoon over the Hudson, clean and austere sweep before them in the view.

They went back to sit restlessly over their grips and not look at each other sometimes, avoiding each other's eyes. The clock ticked in the room, and Moe turned around once and said abruptly, "It's eight o'clock. We'd better go." The doorman said, "I'll call a cab," but they realized they wouldn't have enough to pay the tip. At the subway entrance they didn't know what to say to each other. They hated the idea of going home separately, but there was nothing that could be done now. Esther cried a little and they smoked a cigarette apiece in the entrance-way.

She went out to Brooklyn and he went uptown. He stood in the doorway, his nose against the glass, a serious-looking, red-headed young fellow who had once picked up a girl at Coney Island. He knew just how they would be at home. His old man in the rocker, and his mother complaining about a headache, and little Joe red-cheeked after playing ball and yelling for something to eat. He had never thought much about how he'd grown up. But now it seemed to him that it had always been miserable and dirty, and his old man had always had it hard, and the fellows on his street who had grown up with him and played ball with him were getting married, and some were married and had kids, and whenever he met them they looked worried and busted up about things. The train whirled up toward the Bronx as it had a thousand times before for him since he had gone to work at fifteen. The same tunnel black, the same tired faces rolling with the train's roll, then the outside light flowing in, the familiar landmarks of seared, gray tenement walls, rusty fire-escapes, and drab wash on lines. He didn't want to go home. He didn't want to be married either, though he was in love. The iron road ahead of him, those twin rails ahead of the Bronx express glittered black, snow glittered on sills. He shook his head, trying to free himself of a trap, trying to do something with this feeling of a trap around him pressing down on his head.

Twenty Years of Soviet Drama

By H. W. L. Dana

THE twentieth anniversary of the Russian revolution—like the fifth, the tenth, and the fifteenth anniversary before it—has marked an important new milestone in the extraordinary progress of the Soviet theater. The theatrical season this year in the Soviet Union, as on the occasion of the other important anniversaries, has been made significant by the fact that a whole galaxy of new plays has been produced, exhibitions have been held illustrating the progress of the various theater arts, and many books and articles have been published summing up the development of the Soviet stage to the present. The twenty years of Soviet drama, then, can be conveniently divided into four five-year periods—1917-22; 1922-27; 1927-32; and 1932-37—each ending with a significant anniversary celebration.

1917—1922

DURING THE FIRST FIVE YEARS after the Russian revolution there was an extraordinary amount of experimentation, of imagination, of variety in the theater. All sorts of plays were acted in all sorts of ways.

With the coming of the revolution, the doors were opened wide for producing on the Russian stages countless plays from various foreign countries, many of which had been previously forbidden under the czarist regime. Moscow, the center of what was called the Third International, became the center of a sort of theater international. Nowhere else could the plays of so many different nationalities be seen. Ranging from the plays of ancient Greece, through Shakespeare and Schiller and Shaw, to the latest experiments of German expressionism, this flood of foreign drama was eagerly received by a hungry public. Far from narrowing the scope of dramatic output, the revolution had enormously widened it.

Somewhat similarly, the eager new audience in Russia, far from wishing to cut itself off from the earlier Russian drama, welcomed with enthusiasm all the best plays of the best Russian dramatists. Thousands, literally millions of workers and peasants, who had not had an opportunity to see these plays before, now flooded the theaters night after night as though to make up for lost time.

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Indeed, during the first five years of Soviet power, the number of Russian classics and foreign plays in translation far outweighed the number of new Soviet plays. It was only gradually that the Soviet writers could get far enough away from the revolution to see it in its proper perspective and write about it with sufficient detachment to make good objective drama. Immediately after the revolution it was the lyric poets that first caught the fervor and fire of the revolution in their imaginative outbursts. It was only after several years had passed that the short-story writers and the novelists began to write realistically of the revolution. It took still longer to develop an effective and convincing Soviet dramaturgy.

Such plays as were written in the early years after the revolution, were usually written by the lyric poets and were filled with wild, unbridled exuberance. On November 7, 1918, for example, in honor of the first anniversary of the Russian revolution, there was produced in the Communal Theater of Musical Drama in what was then still called Petrograd, an astounding extravaganza in verse called *Mystery-Bouffe* written by the loud-throated, futurist poet Mayakovski. The poster announcing the coming production depicted the "Old World" as crossed out of existence. In the prologue of the first performance, the curtain, representing the old-fashioned theater, was rent asunder. The play itself, produced by Meyerhold without the use of curtains, represented symbolic and satiric scenes of the North Pole, Noah's Ark, Hell, and Heaven. Other plays produced by Meyerhold at this time, *The Dawn* and *The Earth Prancing,* depicted fantastically imaginary revolutions. *Faust and the City* and *The Chancelor and the Locksmith,* philosophical plays by Lunacharski, then people's commissar of education, produced in 1920 and 1921, also dealt with idealized imaginary revolutions.

Even when the October revolution itself was dramatized in a pageant called *The Storming of the Winter Palace* and produced on the third anniversary in the very square in front of the Winter Palace with eight thousand persons taking part, there was a tendency to allegorize the action by presenting a White Stage on the right for the reactionaries and a Red Stage on the left for the revolutionists.

Thrilling as these productions were at the time, they seem today somewhat crude and exaggerated in comparison with more realistic and better balanced later plays. An exhibition of five years of scenic design, held at the end of this first period in 1922, showed the utmost imaginative extravagance of cubism, expressionism, constructivism, etc., run riot to an extent probably not to be found in any other country or at any other time.

In 1922, at the end of this first five-year period—the period of war-communism, the period during which the civil war was being fought to extend and defend Soviet power through the length and breadth of the Soviet Union and during which the theater itself had expressed a corresponding tumultuousness—came finally triumphant stability both in the struggle for power and in the Soviet theater. In that year were established three left-wing theaters that were to play an important part in revolutionary, proletarian, and trade-union drama: the Theater of the Revolution, the Proletcult and the Moscow Trade Union Theaters.

1922—1927

THE SECOND PERIOD of five years, coming after the end of the civil war and after the beginning of the New Economic Policy, represented a period of readjustment in society which was reflected on the stage. The problem of the return of the Red soldier from the violence of the civil war and his attempt to adjust himself to quiet constructive work, the dangers of disintegration and degeneration, the complications of the N.E.P. and the objectionable Nepmen became the subjects of a series of plays: *Meringue Pie, The End of Krivorylsk, The Mandate, Zoe's Apartment, The Pernicious Element, Stagnation, Rust,* etc. The very names of these plays suggest the nature of the social problems which they tackle.

The problems of moral disruption and corruption inside the Soviet Union were made the more serious because of the outside forces working to suppress the Soviet Union and the spread of communism in other countries. A series of plays dealt with the revolutionary struggle against these forces of reaction in various parts of the world. *The Iron Wall, Lake Lull, Teacher Bubus, When the Cocks Crow, Gas Mask,* etc., dramatized the movement of revolt in Germany. *Echo, D. E., Northeast,* etc., depicted the response to the Russian revolution in America. *Roar China!* and the ballet *Red Poppy* dealt with the oppressed workers in China, threatened by imperialist invasion. Not satisfied with representing the revolutionary movement spreading around the world, in *Ælita* the revolution is imagined as extending to the Red planet Mars.

During this same period, Soviet drama, in addition to dealing with imaginary contemporary revolutions in other countries, tended to deal also with historic revolutions of the past: *Zagmuk* in ancient Babylon and *Spartacus* in ancient Rome; *Wat Tyler* and *Oliver Cromwell* in England; and various plays dealing with the French revolution and the Paris Commune.

Earlier Russian revolutionists and revolutions were also the subjects of many plays during this period: *Stenka Razin* depicted the Cossack outlaw of the seventeenth century; *Emelian Pugachev,* the pseudo-nobleman of the eighteenth century; *The Decembrists,* the revolt of 1825; and innumerable plays, the revolution of 1905. By coincidence, 1925 represented both the hundredth anniversary of the Decembrist revolt and the twentieth anniversary of 1905, and many plays and operas and films in that year were devoted to these two historic events. Eisenstein's *Potemkin* and Pudovkin's *Mother* both celebrated events of 1905: Eisenstein's film characteristically more general and symbolic; Pudovkin's, more personal and intimate.

All these plays dealing with imaginary revolutions or historic revolutions in other countries or earlier revolutions in Russia gathered their significance from the light thrown on them by the triumphant October revolution of 1917. Even when these other revolts were represented as failing, the dramas were prevented from being defeatist by a constant note of "the time

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will come!" Often they were represented as preparations, as dress rehearsals for the great revolution.

With the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the October revolution in 1927, came a flood of plays dramatizing the revolution itself or still more often the civil war which followed it and was the fulfilment of it. For the celebrations on November 7, 1927, practically every theater in Moscow, Leningrad, and the other cities of the Soviet Union put on a new play dealing with some aspect or other of the revolution. *The Year 1917* at the Mali Theater was a chronical play covering the events of that all-eventful year. *The Breaking* at the Vakhtangov Theater focused attention on a revolt on board the cruiser *Aurora*. *Power* at the Proletcult Theater dramatized the seizure of power. *Golgotha* at the Theater of the Revolution gave us the heroic struggle in the North; *The Days of the Turbins* at the Moscow Art Theater and *Lyubov Yarovaya* at the Mali Theater, the struggle in the South; *Armored Train 14-69* at the Moscow Art Theater and *The Blizzard* at the Korsch Theater, the struggle in Siberia. Many films produced for this same anniversary, such as Eisenstein's *Ten Days That Shook the World* and Pudovkin's *End of St. Petersburg,* deserve to rank with the best of these plays.

The end of the first decade after the Russian revolution was the high-water mark of plays and films dealing with the revolution itself. Sufficient time had then passed to give the perspective in the light of which the dramatists could give their characters on both sides a reality that was dramatically convincing. At the same time the events were sufficiently fresh in the memory to hold the audience spell-bound. Sometimes the actors themselves had actually taken part ten years earlier in the events which they were now reënacting. Often too, the audiences were seeing on the stage or screen a dramatic representation of events which they had actually witnessed ten years before. This double fact lent a concentration upon the drama both on the part of the actors and on the part of the spectators such as one has rarely found in the theater elsewhere.

1927—1932

With the beginning of the second decade of Soviet drama, came the Five-Year Plan and a period of feverish construction which had its natural reflection in the theaters. There was a tendency for the plays to turn away from the blood, murder, and sudden death which had prevailed in the revolutionary plays during the first decade, toward problems of reconstruction, collective farms, and industrialization. It was no longer so much the question of the ten days that shook the world as of the ten years that were building a new world.

The question of the peasants in relation to the new social order was opened up in 1927 by Meyerhold's production of *A Window on the Village*. Other plays such as *Bread, Bright Meadow, Wrath,* and films such as *Soil, The Village of Sin,* and Eisenstein's *Old and New* emphasized the advantages of the new collective farms over the old inefficient methods of individual farming.

In addition to plays dealing with the face of the earth, there were plays such as *The Voice from Underground, Black Gold, The Fifth Level,* dealing with the life of the coal miners in the bowels of the earth. Other plays, such as *The Rails Are Humming,* treated the construction of locomotives. Many plays, *Cement, Growth, My Friend,* etc., dealt with the life in the factories. Other plays, such as *Inga* and *Her Way* treated the problem of women in industry. As the enthusiasm grew for accomplishing the Five-Year Plan in four years, plays appeared emphasizing the time element, such as Pogodin's *Tempo* and Katayev's *Time Forward!*

One problem in connection with scientific industrialization which was very troublesome was the relation of the scientist, the specialist, the intellectual, to the workers' republic. A series of plays beginning with Faiko's *The Man with the Portfolio* in 1928 and coming down to Afinogenov's *Fear* tackled this vexing problem of the role of the intellectual. Satires on the obnoxious bourgeois remnants of the old social order appeared in Mayakovski's *The Bedbug* and *The Baths* and in Olesha's *The Conspiracy of Tastes* and *The Three Fat Men.*

Finally came a number of plays dealing quite frankly with the question of Young Communists and love. Among these were *Squaring the Circle, The Days Are Smelting, Slag,* and *Shine Out, Oh Stars!*

1932—1937

The successful conclusion of the First Five-Year Plan, the construction of the great Dnieprostroi dam, the growing prestige of the Soviet Union, and the recognition accorded to it at last by the United States, all led to a period of prevailing optimism in the theater. Even when a play dealt with a tragic death, it was characteristically called an *Optimistic Tragedy*. The plays were brimming with a love of life and the word "life" kept recurring in the titles: *Life Is Changing, Life Is Calling, Good Life, Personal Life.* They seemed to echo Stalin's words: "Life has become better, comrades. Life has become more joyous!" The rights of the individual were more strongly asserted than in the cruder earlier plays and the dramatic clash represented was no longer merely an external conflict between classes and masses, but an internal conflict of emotions within the individual. The same optimistic spirit is seen in the film dealing with the education of homeless boys, *The Road to Life,* or in Pogodin's play about the rehabilitation of prisoners working on the Baltic-White Sea Canal, *Aristocrats,* later shown on the screen as *Prisoners.*

As in Soviet music the proportion of pieces composed in the major key has steadily increased over those in the minor key, so in Soviet drama comedies came to predominate over tragedies. The widespread popularity of Shkvarkin's farcical *Strange Child* and the exaltation of the enthusiasm and inventiveness of youth in Kirshon's *Marvelous Alloy* are characteristic of the high spirits of this period.

In 1937 the extraordinarily exuberant celebration on February 10 of the hundredth anniversary of Pushkin's death revealed the continued eagerness in the Soviet Union to keep alive the best of the literature of a hundred years ago. Within a year thirteen million volumes

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of works by Pushkin and about Pushkin were published, and innumerable plays, operas, and films have dealt with his life or with themes taken from the inexhaustible reservoir of his writings.

The struggle in Spain against the forces of fascism has evoked such plays as *A Salute to Spain* and *Alcazar.* The triple threat to the Soviet Union itself from Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, and imperialist Japan with its aggressive invasion of China, has stimulated an interest in the defense of the border as exemplified in Dovzhenko's film *Frontier* and brought about a revival of interest in earlier Russian revolutionary struggles. The revolution of 1905 has been treated with a fresh understanding in films such as *The Youth of Maxim* and *The Return of Maxim;* Katayev's novel *Peace Is Where the Tempests Blow* about two boys during the 1905 revolution has recently been popular in both play and in film form.

It has been, however, above all, the October revolution which has naturally enough been the theme once more of a number of plays on the stage and on the screen. In November 1937, the twentieth anniversary of the October revolution was celebrated, as the tenth anniversary had been, by a whole galaxy of new plays and films dealing with the revolution of 1917. Now, however, they no longer deal with the external outcome of the revolution and the civil war alone, but turn by preference to the events leading up to the revolution. More attention than before is devoted to the intelligent planning by Lenin for the coming revolution. Shchukin, the actor at the Vakhtangov who had created the title role in Gorki's *Yegor Bulichev,* has now enacted most sympathetically the role of Lenin in Pogodin's *The Man with the Gun* and also in the film called *Lenin in October. On the Bank of the Neva* at the Mali Theater and *The Truth* at the Theater of the Revolution also deal with Petrograd on the eve of the October revolution and were also produced during November 1937 in celebration of the twentieth anniversary.

These latest plays are not content with external realism: the photographic representation of fixed characters. They strive for socialist realism: the study of cause and effect on characters continually changing.

The evolution of Soviet drama, then, has passed from the initial five-year period of feverish experimentation with crude and exaggerated melodrama, through a second period of greater detachment and convincing dramatization, and through a third period devoted to the adaptation of humanity to socialist reconstruction, into a final period of exhilarating enthusiasm for man's power to change himself. The progress of the Soviet theater, then, through these twenty years has been marked, not only by the extraordinary growth in the number of theaters and moving picture houses and the ever increasing numbers of actors and of spectators, but also by the development of the drama itself into a more and more mellow and mature understanding of the individual and of the state and of the relations between them.

From Texas

By L. A. Lauer

"THEM new squatters are from Texas, paw."

"Yah?"

"Yeah."

"They don't look no better than Mexicans from here."

"They ain't Mexicans, paw."

"Well, what the hell they doin' nobbin' with those spicks; they got an outfit like they was spicks."

"They's no one else to talk to 'em, paw."

"You was talkin' to 'em."

"Jist their paw; the kids was gittin' water from the well up to Jeff's place. I didn't see their maw neither, but he tole me they's from Texas. He tole me he heerd we're from Texas, too. Someone in Roswell musta tole him, paw."

"Tole him what?"

"About us bein' from Texas."

"What else he say?"

"Wants to know if they kin camp here fer a few days; an' wants to know if they's work here. Oh, yeah, an' he wants to know kin he dig fer worms to go fishin'."

"Wants a hell of a lot, don't he. What's his name?"

"I dunno, paw."

"What was he doin'?"

"Unpackin' their duffle, I guess."

"Yah?"

"Yeah."

"Those Mexes move on yet? I said fer 'em to move fast offa this place."

"They're gone, paw. They went soon's I came up to those new squatters. I guess they tole these new people they could get water at Jeff's. I guess they'll camp at Jeff's theyselves tonight."

"Looks like Jeff has got soft in the head since he went broke. Time was he wouldn't fool with no spicks any more than I would; an' now, by Christ, when he ain't got nothin', he gives half of it away. . . . How do you know those spick bastards are goin' to sleep on his place?"

"I jist guessed it, paw."

"Yah?"

"Yeah."

"What kind of a rattle-trap those squatters got, kid?"

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"It looked like a Chevvy truck, paw."

"Where was the old lady?"

"Dunno. I didn't see her. She musta been gittin' wood somewheres."

"Gittin' wood? Who the god damn hell says they could pick wood on this place? Did you tell 'em they could? 'Cause if ya did, I'll knock hell outa ya an' some sense. . . ."

"I ain't sure now, paw. I don't know if she was gittin' wood; I jist guessed maybe she was."

"Yah?"

"Yeah."

"Where was they last night?"

"Roswell. They been there fer a week he says. He says he cain't get no work there 'cause he tried. Before that I guess he came by way of Clovis. Says he ain't never been this way before."

"What else he say?"

"Not much. 'Cept he wants to know where my paw is an' if he kin see you. That was when he wants to know is they work here. He wants fer his kids to go to school when he gits work. I tole him about the school. Oh, yeah, an' then he asked me about the Bottomless Lakes an' if they's any fish in them an' if the Pecos ever gits any higher and is there any fish there."

"Cain't fish if he ain't got no license—leastways not on my property nor nowheres else."

"I guess maybe he knows that paw, but I didn't think of it."

"You didn't think of it? What the hell . . . you ain't supposed to think, kid, an' I'll tell ya that if it's the last damn thing I ever do tell ya. It's a goddamn pretty pass when a kid twelve years old talks about thinkin'. If that damn school teaches ya to think at yer age it's no good. I'll do all the thinkin' around here, kid, an' don't fergit it. . . . An' here's somethin' else: you was too damn friendly with those spicks today, get that? I was watchin' ya all the time an' ya ain't foolin' me. First thing ya know, we'll have all the spicks across county stoppin' off here if we lets 'em stay long enough to talk. I tells 'em to move, an' move quick, an' by Jesus Christ you talk to 'em. Next time . . ."

"Well, paw, one of the kids jist asked me somethin'. Gosh, I didn't say much."

"You listen to me, kid. It ain't what ya say, it's the way ya say it. Ya gotta talk, sure, but talk right. Don't let me catch you with a grin on yer face again when I'm talkin' turkey with those greasy bastards."

"All right, paw."

"You're damn right it'd better be all right. Now, as soon as his kids come back, I'm goin' down to see what that outfit looks like. How many kids he got?"

"Two, I guess."

"Two, eh? Well, if he's from Texas maybe they kin stay here a while an' he kin chop wood fer his rent."

"I don't think they got much to eat, paw."

"Well, what do ya want me to do about that? We ain't got any too much ourself, by Jesus, an' it's every man fer himself. We cain't feed four more people, you know that, or if ya don't ya sure as hell ought to."

"Well, paw, cain't they jist camp there under those cottonwoods without choppin' wood while their paw makes the rounds lookin' fer a job?"

"Well, I'll be damned. Kid, what's got into ya? They ain't nobody gits rent nor nothin' else free, an' if you don't know that, it's high time ya did. The kids kin chop wood anyways as long as it gits chopped."

"Look, paw, lookee; the kids are comin' back from Jeff's. They each got a pail of water. They's over on the left of the road by your fence line, paw."

"Yah, I see 'em."

"They're little kids, paw."

"Yah?"

"Yeah. They're lots littler than me."

"By Christ, there's the old woman comin' up along the dry creek, an' by Jesus, she's got wood. I'll sure as hell tell 'em off on that when I git down there."

"Maybe she got the wood from the other side, paw."

"Yah, an' maybe she didn't. By God, kid, she looks like a nigger from here—or a Mex."

"Yeah, she does look kinda dark."

"Say, those kids don't look right. Ya sure; say kid, ya sure ya ain't lyin' to me about him being from Texas?"

"No, paw. He says he's from Texas. An' I know what ye're thinkin'. Ye're tainkin' he's a Mex. Well, he ain't a Mex. You kin tell that from here easy."

"Well, he goddamn better not be, if he's from Texas. Say, kid, I'm lookin' at the woman, an' she sure as hell looks wrong to me."

"There goes their paw out to meet her, paw."

"Yah?"

"Yeah. An' their paw's got their blankets laid out, an' looks like he's got a sort of tent rolled up there, paw. Lookee, paw, won't it be swell if they's got a tent? Aw, maybe it's jist a tarp though, it's hardly big enough fer a tent."

"Yah?"

"Yeah. Look, paw; looks like they got a box of grub there back of the truck. We sure won't have to feed 'em. They kin stay if we don't have to feed 'em, eh, paw?"

"Any more of that an' I'll crack ya, kid. An' ya don't go to Jeff's place no more, ya hear me. He's got ya lookin' out of the back of yer head. He's worse'n the school teachers."

"I ain't said nothin' about Jeff."

"I know ya ain't, an' ya better not. But Jeff ain't gonna make no spick lover outa you nor any my brats. Now git the hell back to the house, an' I'll go down an' tell that renegade what I think of his goddamn half-breed outfit."

"Aw, let 'em stay, paw."

"Hell, no."

"Aw, please, paw, they won't hurt nothin'. I'll watch 'em. . . . Ouch, oh gee paw, ya hurt me."

"G'wan back to the house."

"Paw—let 'em stay."

"Git, goddamn ya. After I run those spick brats offa here, I'll tend to you an' maybe run you off too. Now git, git."

"I'll git, paw; but they's got a right to stay—on account they're citizens like the school teacher says. Ouch, paw; owww!"

"Goddamn spick lover. Git."

"I'll git. But they's got a right—a right to stay."

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